EUROPA COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

Russian Nationalism and the Russian-Ukrainian War

Autocracy-Orthodoxy-Nationality

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Taras Kuzio

ROUTLEDGE

Russian Nationalism and the Russian-Ukrainian War

This book is the first to provide an in-depth understanding of the 2014 crisis, Russia's annexation of Crimea and Europe's de facto war between Russia and Ukraine. The book provides a historical and contemporary understanding behind President Vladimir Putin Russia's obsession with Ukraine and why Western opprobrium and sanctions have not deterred Russian military aggression.

The volume provides a wealth of detail about the inability of Russia, from the time of the Tsarist Empire, throughout the era of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and since the dissolution of the latter in 1991, to accept Ukraine as an independent country and Ukrainians as a people distinct and separate from Russians. The book highlights the sources of this lack of acceptance in aspects of Russian national identity. In the Soviet period, Russians principally identified themselves not with the Russian Soviet Federative Republic, but rather with the USSR as a whole. Attempts in the 1990s to forge a post-imperial Russian civic identity grounded in the newly independent Russian Federation were unpopular, and notions of a far larger Russian 'imagined community' came to the fore. A post-Soviet integration of Tsarist Russian great power nationalism and White Russian emigre chauvinism had already transformed and hardened Russian denial of the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians as a people, even prior to the 2014 crises in Crimea and the Donbas. Bringing an end to both the Russian occupation of Crimea and to the broader Russian-Ukrainian conflict can be expected to meet obstacles not only from the Russian de facto President-for-life, Vladimir Putin, but also from how Russia perceives its national identity.

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‘It appears, and this is highly regrettable, that Ukraine is being turned, slowly but steadily, into an antipode of Russia, an anti-Russia, a territory from which, judging by all appearances, we will never stop receiving news that need to be given special attention in terms of protecting the national security of the Russian Federation.’

President Vladimir Putin to the UN Security Council, 14 May 2021 - http: //www. en. kremlin. ru/events/president/news/65572

‘The current president of this tortured country [Ukraine] is a person with certain [Jewish] ethnic roots, who spoke Russian all his life. Moreover, he worked in Russia and received significant profits from his Russian business activities. Nevertheless, at a certain moment, having become head of state, from fear of provoking another ‘Maidan’ against his personal power, he completely changed his political and moral orientation. In fact, he renounced his identity. He [Volodymyr Zelenskyy] began to earnestly serve the most rabid nationalist forces in Ukraine...

This is reminiscent of the ludicrous situation where members of the Jewish intelligentsia in Nazi Germany, for ideological reasons, would be asked to serve in the SS. Therefore, he shows himself to be more of a nationalist than the most radical of them.

The current generation of Ukrainian leaders are very dependent people. Much has already been said and written about this, including in the well-

known [July 2021] article by Vladimir V. Putin. The country [Ukraine] is under direct foreign control. Ukraine is completely dependent upon cash injections into its economy from handouts given by the United States and the EU and direct management of the Ukrainian secret services by their American patrons. It therefore makes no sense for us [Russia] to deal with these vassals [Ukraine]. The business [of Ukraine] must be dealt with through its overlord [USA].

In view of this the eternal and central question arises of what to do when we are faced with this situation. Well, nothing. We wait for the appearance of a sane leadership in Ukraine whose goal is not to provoke total confrontation with Russia by taking the country to the brink of war and does not organise the moronic 'Crimean Platform' created to fool the country's population and pump up their muscles before elections, but instead at building equal and mutually beneficial relations with Russia. Only when there will be such a Ukrainian leadership will it be worthwhile dealing with Ukraine. Russia knows how to wait. We are patient people. '

Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev, 11 October 2021 - https: //www. kommersant. ru/doc/5028300?

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2. 1 Map of Casualties of Ukrainian Security Forces by Region of

Preface

Prior to the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, Western scholars of the Soviet Union ignored and downplayed the nationality question in the Soviet Union and often used ‘Russia’ and the ‘USSR’ interchangeably. Western Sovietologists have experienced two crises in the last three decades.

The first crisis was brought about by the disintegration of the USSR which they never predicted would happen. The majority of Sovietologists had focused on Russia and ‘Kremlinology’ and had ignored the non-Russian nations. Left-wing scholars believed Soviet propaganda the nationality question had been resolved because ‘Leftists shared the Marxist inclination to view nationalism as a transitory phenomenon’ (Subtelny 1994, p. 142). [1] Meanwhile, ‘American liberals generally looked askance at nationalist issues and causes’ while ‘Conservatives, by and large, tended to view the USSR as a massive, threatening, undifferentiated whole’ (Subtelny 1994, p. 142).

Western Sovietology was influenced by Russian emigre historians of Russia and historians who adopted Russian nationalist frameworks which air-brushed Ukraine from history (see Kuzio 2020, pp. 9-35). Support for the indivisibility of the Russian Empire among Russian historians meant, ‘not only did the Russian emigre academics pay little heed to the non-Russians but some vehemently objected against attempts to study them’ (Subtelny 1994, p. 142).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the broadening of Sovietology to researching the non-Russians and nationality problems in the USSR was largely a North American phenomenon (see Chapter 3). In the UK, Sovietology remained highly Russo-centric and focused on ‘Kremlinology; ’ British scholars have only researched the non-Russian nations of the former USSR since 1991. In December 1991, after Ukraine’s referendum on independence received a massive 92. 3 percent endorsement, individuals claiming to be from the ‘British Foreign Office’ visited the Ukrainian bookstore in London’s Notting Hill Gate in search of histories of Ukraine. [2] The British government needed to urgently swot up on a country which had just

appeared on the map with armed forces numbering 800, 000 and the world's third largest stockpile of nuclear weapons. In the 1990s, the UK government expanded the number of scholarly positions in post-Soviet studies with three positions on contemporary Ukraine. Despite these changes British historians of Russia continue to use Russian nationalist frameworks (see Kuzio 2020, pp. 9-35), ignoring Ukrainian historiography published in North America and Ukraine (Magocsi 1996, 2010; Subtelny 2000; Plokhy 2015).

The second crisis for Western scholars of post-Soviet Eurasia was brought about by the 2014 crisis, Russia's annexation of Crimea and the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war (see Subtelny 1994; Zhuk 2014; Kuzio 2020). This is felt in scholarly writing on the 2014 crisis which often downplays the influence of nationalism in Putin's Russia (for surveys see Kuzio 2017, pp. 8-32; Kuzio 2020, pp. 82-105) or blames the West (see Sakwa 2015, 2017; German and Karagiannis 2018; Cohen 2019). As Myroslav Shkandrij (2016) writes, 'nationalism' is the most abused term in the Russian-Ukrainian war. A relatively small number of scholars and journalists have analysed nationalism in Putin's regime and have understood how this influences the Kremlin's policies towards Ukraine (see Coalson 2014; Feifer 2015; Plokhy 2015, 2017, pp. 326327; Belton 2020; Chatham House 2021; pp. 70-81). This book is a contribution to this field of research.

Most scholarly writing has studied nationalism in Russia in three ways (see Kuzio 2020, pp. 82-105). The first is to argue ideology is unimportant to Putin's regime because it draws on nationalism instrumentally; for example, during elections and historical anniversaries. The second is to downplay nationalism in Russia with the purpose of portraying Putin's regime in a more favourable light and to disprove the Russian president is a nationalist (see Kuzio 2020, pp. 82-105). The third is to argue, as this book does, that great power nationalism defines Putin's regime, especially in how Russia relates to Ukraine and Ukrainians. Irrespective of whether Putin is an instrumental or a committed nationalist, Russian policies have had important domestic and international consequences, as clearly seen in 2014 when Europe faced its biggest crisis since the end of World War II.

Scholarly writing which has downplayed Russian nationalism has of course ignored the influence of Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigres on Russian-Ukrainian relations (see Kolsto and Blakkisrud 2016; Kuzio 2020, pp. 82105). This is surprising because, as Fiona Hill and Clifford G. Gaddy (2015, pp. 76) write, 'History for Putin is very personal and immediate as well as a source of material for his own political use. ' Putin did not 'grow up, go to school, live or work in the same cultural, economic, political, and historical environment as Western leaders' (Hill and Gaddy 2015, p. 278). Andrei Soldatov and Irina Borogan (2019, p. 218) add that Putin had good tactical skills 'but strategically, he lived in the 19th century' where descendants of White Russian emigres were 'stuck in the memories of the glorious past. '

Meanwhile, realists have focused on NATO and EU enlargement and democracy promotion as causes of the 2014 crisis (Mearsheimer 2014). At the heart of their argument is their belief that Ukraine is part of Russia's sphere of influence which, because the West intervened, led to the 2014 crisis (Mearsheimer 2014; Sakwa 2015, 2017; Cohen 2019).

These approaches ignore three critical junctures in Putin's regime (Capoccia and Kelemen 2007). In 2005-2008, during the first critical juncture, 'it is possible to speak of the emergence of a state-sponsored form of civilizational nationalism' in Russia (Linde 2016, p. 606; Verkhovskii and Pain 2012).

In 2011-2013, during the second critical juncture, and since there has been a transformation and intensification of nationalism and President Putin embarked on the 'gathering of Russian lands. ' In 2011-2012, the image of Ukraine as an 'anti-Russian project' emerged, a myth which Putin (2021) repeatedly returned to in the following decade. [3] Andrei Zubov believes that it was during this period when the Soviet framework of separate but close Russians and Ukrainians was replaced by the Tsarist and White Russian emigre view of an *obshcherusskiy narod* (pan-Russian nation[4]); that is, Ukrainians are one of three branches of the 'Russian' people. [5]

It was not coincidental that the 2014 crisis and Russian military aggression against Ukraine took place during Russia's re-Stalinisation. In 2012-2021,

the number of Russians who have a positive view of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin more than doubled from 28 to 59 percent. During the same period the number of Ukrainians with a positive view of Stalin declined from 23 to 18 percent. The biggest growth in support for erecting a monument to Stalin was among Russians aged 18-29, increasing during this period from 12 to 50 percent (Levada Centre 2021b).

The first two junctures and 'gathering of Russian lands' had a deadly impact upon Ukraine and directly led to the 2014 crisis and ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. The UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) estimated that in 2014-2021 there had been 42, 800-47, 000 casualties which included 13, 200-13, 400 dead (3, 390 civilians, 4, 200 Ukrainian military and 5, 800 members of Russian military and proxies) and 29, 600-33, 600 wounded (7, 000-9, 000 civilians, 9, 800-10, 800 Ukrainian military and 12, 800-13, 800 Russian military and proxies). Civilians accounted for 25 to 26 percent of the total number of people killed in the war. [6]

A third critical juncture took place in 2020 when Russian constitutional changes extended Putin's term in office until 2036. This introduced a modified version of *Pravoslavie, samoderzhavie, narodnost* (Orthodoxy-Autocracy-Nationality) (Laruelle 2021, p. 9), the ideological foundations of Tsarist Russia drawn up in 1833 by Minister of Education Count Sergei Uvarov under Emperor Nicholas I. Uvarov's triad is 'reused in official Russian narratives in a revitalised continuous manner' (Russian Information Campaign Against Ukraine State and Defence Forces 2016, p. 19). Hill and Gaddy (2015, p. 76) and Catherine Belton (2020, p. 260) describe Assistant to the President of the Russian Federation Vladislav Surkov's concept of 'sovereign democracy, ' unveiled in February 2006, as a contemporary version of Orthodoxy-Autocracy-Nationality.

The first element of Count Uvarov's ideology places the Russian Orthodox Church at the centre of 'Russian' culture and civilisation enmeshed in traditional, conservative values. 'Russian' is equated with eastern Slavic peoples and the pan-Russian nation. Autocracy is self-evident in Russia's 'consolidated authoritarian regime'[7] and the perceived duty by the Russian state to inculcate 'patriotic' (i. e., nationalistic) education in children,

promote the quasi-religious cult of the Great Patriotic War and exalt Russia as a great power and heir to the Soviet Union. Nationality is centred on the Russian language as the cornerstone of the 'state forming people' of the Russian Federation, the *Russkii Mir* (Russian World), and Russian-speaking *sootechestvennik* (compatriots).

Taken together the three critical junctures had profound implications for Russian-Ukrainian relations, led to the Russian-Ukrainian war, and will make it very difficult to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Although overall Russian interest in Ukrainian issues has been declining since 2014, Russians give high support for irredentism when they are asked questions on Ukraine. Since 2014, there has been a constant level of Russian support for Crimea's annexation of between 84 and 86 percent, with only ten percent opposed: 'There is not a single other indicator carried out by the Levada Centre in the last seven years that has remained so stable' (Levinson 2021). Russia's occupation of Crimea brought about huge losses to the Ukrainian economy calculated at $135 billion (Centre for Economic Strategy 2021). Little wonder, only 4 percent of Ukrainians accept Russian control over Crimea while 72 percent of Ukrainians support Crimea as an autonomous republic (its status prior to 2014) or as a Crimean Tatar autonomous republic within Ukraine (Rating Sociological Group 2021a). A mere 7 percent of Ukrainians would be willing to recognise Crimea as Russian in return for a peace agreement in the Donbas (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2021b).

53 percent of Russians have supported the detachment of Russia's two proxy enclaves in the Donbas, the DNR (Donetsk Peoples Republic) and the LNR (Luhansk Peoples Republic) either as 'independent' states or annexed by Russia, with only 26 percent supporting them remaining within Ukraine (Levada Centre 2021a). In 2014-2015, during the height of the Russian-Ukrainian war, an average of 60 percent of Russians supported 'volunteers' (i. e., nationalist mercenaries) fighting for the DNR and LNR (Levada Centre 2015). Three quarters of these mercenaries were from Russia (Voltska 2014; Voltskaya and Sindelar 2015). 51-52 percent of Russians believed the Kremlin's disinformation that there are no Russian armed forces in Ukraine with only 3-4 percent believing the war is due to Russian military intervention (Levada Centre 2015). Russian mercenaries

who participated in the fighting witnessed the reality of Russia's military involvement on the ground. 'Former fascist' and now 'Russian orthodox monarchist' Anton Raevskiy, who was recruited to fight in the Donbas by the Russian All-Military Union, a White emigre organisation established in 1924, revealed: 'I can say with absolute certainty that all of the mid- and high-level commanders - from the battalion to the brigades - were Russian advisers. All of the military equipment we had, all of the weapons: It was all from Russia' (Schreck and Volchek 2016).

70 percent of Russian citizens supported the distribution of Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens, which had been given to 630, 000 people by September 2021, with only 22 percent opposed (Levada Centre 2019).

These opinion polls conducted by the Levada Centre, Russia's only remaining independent sociological service, reflect a deep level of Russian schizophrenia towards Ukraine. While continuing to believe Ukrainians are 'fraternal brothers, ' Russians are - bizarrely - at the same time in favour of annexing and detaching Ukrainian territory and supportive of 'volunteers' travelling to Ukraine to fight against its central government. This can only be explained by a large majority of Russians buying into traditional Russian nationalist myths and stereotypes of Ukraine and Ukrainians propagated by Putin's regime.

Russia's schizophrenia towards Ukraine, seeing it both as a 'fraternal brother' *and* a mortal enemy, was clearly seen in Spring 2021 when Russia undertook a massive military exercise on its border with south-eastern Ukraine. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Mariia Zakharova and Deputy Chief of Staff Dmitry Kozak threatened Ukraine with 'destruction, ' ceasing to exist and 'unforeseen' and 'irreversible consequences for Ukrainian statehood. ' Kozak warned a war with Russia would be 'the beginning of the end of Ukraine. ' Meanwhile Ukraine joining NATO would lead to the 'collapse of Ukraine. '[8] The Russian media hyped up the 'disappearance' of Ukraine from the map (see Zubchenko 2021). [9]

You could be excused from thinking these comments were made in the 19th and not in the 21st century but at their heart lies a disdain for, and

nonacceptance of, Ukraine and Ukrainians. This is made worse by viewing the very concept of an independent Ukrainian state as a hostile act against Russia and '(pan-)Russian unity. '

Claims of the 'artificiality' of Ukraine are also found among Western *Putinversteher* (Putin Understander) scholars who describe Ukraine as allegedly being composed of two cultural groups with eastern Ukraine belonging to the Russian and eastern Slavic (i. e., Russian World) civilisation space (Cohen 2019). Stephen F. Cohen (2019, pp. 17), who had combined being coeditor of the left-wing *The Nation* magazine with Russian great power nationalism and chauvinism towards Ukraine and Ukrainians, was adamant in his belief that eastern Ukraine had a 'shared civilisation' with Russia. Cohen (2019, p. 83) blamed the West for undermining 'centuries of intimate relations between large segments of Ukrainian society and Russia, including family ties. ' While US universities are scrutinising their legacies for links to slavery and racism, another US professor, Nicolai N. Petro deems it acceptable to use the pejorative and chauvinistic term *'maloros'* ('Little Russians') when talking about contemporary Ukrainians. [10]

As James Sherr has pointed out, it is very difficult to find people in Russia, including among democrats, who can talk seriously about Ukraine without using derogatory terms such as chaos, confusion, ungovernable, incapable of running a country and a Western puppet state. [11] While Russian great power nationalists openly write about an alleged 'artificial' Ukraine, 'liberal' scholars camouflage their similar approach by exaggerating regional and linguistic divisions in Ukraine (see German and Karagiannis 2018). Dmitri Trenin, a long-time 'expert' at Moscow's Carnegie Centre is an example of those scholars who camouflage their Russian great power nationalism. [12] Trenin uses the same inflammatory language as the Kremlin about the threat of an end to Ukrainian statehood while exaggerating the 'cultural split' between 'nationalist' West and 'Russian-speaking' East. Lydia S. Tonoyan and Daniel P. Payne (2010, p. 258) make the untrue claim that eastern Ukraine is 'historically Russian territory populated by mostly Russians and until now highly sympathetic if not towards restored unity with Russia, then at least towards close ties between the two states. ' If they had checked Soviet and Ukrainian census data, they would have found

Ukrainians to constitute a majority in every eastern Ukrainian *oblast* (province); unless, that is, they define ‘Russians’ in the same manner as Putin in constituting a pan-Russian nation.

Some Western scholars hold similar views to Putin on how south-eastern Ukraine is not ‘Ukrainian. ’ More than a decade before the crisis Anatol Lieven (1999) wrote that only 40 percent of Ukraine is historically Ukrainian, and the remainder was settled jointly by Ukrainians and Russians - a chauvinistic view with which Putin and the Kremlin agree. Petro (2015) agrees with Lieven (1999) and Putin (2021) that south-eastern Ukraine was gifted by Russia making Ukraine a ‘bicultural’ country - a statement made without citing any Ukrainian opinion polls (on this type of academic orientalism see Kuzio 2020, pp. 66-81). Anna Matveeva (2018, p. 31) claims south-eastern Ukraine has a ‘weak association with new (Ukrainian) statehood. ’ Stylianos A. Sotiriou (2018, p. 51) repeats standard Russian chauvinistic descriptions of Ukraine as a ‘land of irreconcilable differences’ which is ‘on the verge of disintegration into different parts’ because it has a ‘fragmented and porous national identity framework. ’

An example of Russian scholars camouflaging their great power nationalism are Ivan D. Loshkariov and Andrey A. Sushentsov (2018, p. 73). Writing about the Euromaidan Revolution they ignore the murder of 100 protestors and instead focus on the ‘scale of violence used by the opposition’ who came to power ‘on a wave of violence’ against pro-Russian forces. Repeating the Kremlin’s line, Loshkariov and Sushentsov (2018, p. 74) claim ‘Russians’ in Ukraine are a ‘diaspora’ who ‘share a common Russian identity, reject the goals and values of Maidan and consider Russia a vital power in Ukrainian politics. ’ These views of Ukraine are not written by ‘independent’ scholars but repeat the talking points of the Kremlin which writes: ‘It is difficult to call the Russians a diaspora, because Russians (Great Russians) and Ukrainians (Little Russians) are one people. Nevertheless, Kiev treats the country’s 8 million Russian population as second-class citizens. ’[13] Loshkariov and Sushentsov (2018), like most Russian politicians and scholars, cannot comprehend the concept of Russian-speaking Ukrainian patriotism. Losh-kariov and Sushentsov (2018, pp. 75, 79) claim, with no polling data to back it up, that ‘Russians’ have

always been repressed in Ukraine, ethnic conflict was ‘almost unavoidable’ and ‘it took them two decades to realize this fact. ’

Matveeva (2018, p. 28) makes an additional claim typically found in Russian disinformation about repression of the Russian language in Ukraine, writing that the Russian language received a ‘decisive blow’ when it was removed from the Donbas during Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency (20052010). As Michal Wawrzonek (2021, p. 34) writes, accounts of forced Ukrainianisation in the Donbas ‘disseminated by the Russian World’ have ‘little in common with reality on the ground. ’ As with her claim about ministers of culture (see later), Matveeva (2018, p. 28) provided no sources for her unsubstantiated claim about the repression of the Russian language. In 2012 during Viktor Yanukovych’s presidency (2010-2014), 51. 4 percent of children in Donetsk *oblast* were being taught in Russian and 48. 6 percent in Ukrai-nian, [14] a proportion of children being taught in Ukrainian which was far lower than in neighbouring Kharkiv (74. 4 percent), Dnipropetrovsk (80. 9 percent) and Zaporizhzhya (73. 3 percent). The Russian language continued to dominate electronic and paper media and book production through to the Euromaidan Revolution and since. [15]

Blaming Ukrainian nationalism for provoking the ‘rebellion of Russians’ in eastern Ukraine which led to a ‘civil war’ (Loshkariov and Sushentsov 2018, p. 87) is another claim made by Russian disinformation. Matveeva (2018, pp. 28, 45) blames Ukrainian nationalism for the Donetsk separatist violence. She approvingly cites Richard Sakwa (2015, 2017) in stating that the armed violence was a rebellion against a ‘particular type of statehood’ imposed by western Ukrainians (and the West). *Putinversteher* scholars believe, like Russian leaders, Ukraine is divided into two cultural groups and part of the Russian World. Ukraine should therefore act like Belarus by pursuing eastern Slavic identity policies which were undertaken in the Soviet Union and since 1994 under Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka (see Petro 2015; Sakwa 2015, 2017; Matveeva 2018; Loshkariov and Sushentsov 2018; Cohen 2019;). [16]Petro (2015, p. 32) believes the way to end the Russian-Ukrainian war is by Ukraine ‘embracing the Russian language and culture as legitimate aspects of Ukrainian identity. ’ *Putinversteher* scholars agree with Russian leaders that Ukraine was captured by western Ukrainian nationalists during the

Euromaidan Revolution, is pursuing western Ukrainian ‘nationalistic’ identity policies and has been turned into a Western puppet state.[17]

Western academic orientalism (see Kuzio 2020, pp. 66-81) has no time for Ukrainian primary sources and opinion polls. A stable 71-72 percent of Ukrainians believe their country and Russia are at war, including nearly half (48 percent) in Ukraine’s east (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2019, 2021b). When asked which allies would assist Ukraine in defending itself only 6 percent believed it would be Russia while 44 percent thought it would be the US; even Turkey had three times more adherents (18 percent) (Razumkov Centre 2021a). A majority of Ukrainians believe Russian armed forces are participating in the war, providing arms to the DNR and LNR and control the political and military activities of their Donbas proxies (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2021b). In 2021, 81 percent of Ukrainians held a negative view of Putin (Rating Sociological Group 2021c). Positive Ukrainian attitudes to Russia collapsed from 91 percent in February 2009 to a low of 37 percent in December 2014, including between a quarter and a third in south-eastern Ukraine. By 2021, equal numbers of Ukrainians held positive (41 percent) and negative (42 percent) views of Russia, as opposed to higher negative views of Russian political leaders (Kyiv International Institute for Sociological Studies and Levada Centre 2021). 74. 1 percent of Ukrainians, including 57. 9 percent in the South and 54. 4 percent in the East, and majorities in all age groups, men and women believe Russia is a threat to Ukraine (Razumkov 2021a).

The claim western Ukrainians are imposing their views on the remainder of Ukraine is a staple of Kremlin disinformation and Western *Putinversteher* scholars but has no foundation in historical facts. [18] Matveeva (2018, p. 28) makes the unsubstantiated allegation that all Ukrainian ministers of culture since 1991 have been from western Ukraine who imposed a regional culture grounded in ‘pastoral roots’ on the national level to legitimise Ukrainian nationhood. In fact, of the 17 ministers of culture only seven (41 percent) were from western Ukraine, another seven were from central Ukraine and three were from south-eastern Ukraine. [19]

Much of the Western scholarship on Ukraine’s regional divisions have been highly exaggerated; claims of Ukraine on the verge of disintegration have

existed since the mid-1990s (see Kuzyk 2019). Ukraine has shown a strong sense of national unity in the face of Russian military aggression. As this author's field research has found and this book shows, a majority of Ukraine's Russian speakers are Ukrainian patriots.

Exaggerated and unsubstantiated focus on 'nationalism' in Ukraine ignores how it would be possible for a Jewish Russian-speaker to have won a landslide of 73. 22 percent in the 2019 presidential elections, winning every *oblast* except one. Exaggerated focus on 'nationalism' in Ukraine takes the spotlight away from the participation of Russian nationalists, imperialists, fascists, neo-Nazis and those nostalgic for the USSR and Tsarist Empire in the Russian-Ukrainian war. Exaggerated focus on 'Ukrainian nationalism' also side steps Russian national identity as the driver of the Kremlin's military aggression against Ukraine.

Putin's *siloviki* (security forces) installed neo-fascist *Russkoe Yedynstvo* (Russian Unity) Party leader Sergei Aksyonov as prime minister in Crimea and the extremist Donetsk Republic political party in the DNR. Russian Unity received only 4 percent in the 2010 Crimean Supreme Soviet elections while the illegal Donetsk Republic had been banned and never allowed to stand in elections. Russian Unity merged with Putin's ruling *Yedinaya*

Rossiya (United Russia) Party. In a telephone conversation intercepted by the *Sluzhba bezpeky Ukrayiny* (Security Service of Ukraine - SBU), neo-Nazi *Russkoe nasionalnoe edinstvo* (Russian National Unity - RNE) leader Aleksandr Barkashov advised one of the DNR leaders, Dmitry Boitsov, to declare an 89 percent vote in favour in the May 2014 separatist referendum - a figure that became the official result (Wilson 2014, p. 133). [20] The Donetsk Republic political party won with 68. 53 percent of the vote in the fraudulent November 2014 DNR 'elections. ' Donetsk Republic founders, Andrei Purgin and Oleg Frolov became members of the DNR 'government' and 'parliament. ' *Putinversteher* scholars and experts in Moscow and the West routinely condemn 'nationalistic' policies in Ukraine against the Russian language while ignoring the absence of any minority rights for Ukrainians in the Russian Federation (see Prina 2016) and the removal of the Ukrainian language from Russian-occupied Crimea and Russian-

controlled Donbas. [21] The re-introduction of Russification in these territories has placed the Ukrainian language in a more precarious position than it had been in the former USSR. [22]

Russian repression of Crimean Tatars in occupied Crimea and the Donbas is grounded in racist and Islamophobic discourse and discriminatory policies (Kuzio 2020, pp. 36-65; Coynash and Charron 2019). A 2021 UNESCO report documented the massive plundering of artefacts in Crimea and the destruction and alteration of ruins and buildings with the goal of proving Russia's 'ancient links' to the peninsula and minimising its ties to Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians. [23] In addition to political, religious, and ethnic discrimination and political repression, Russia is undertaking four policies which are illegal in international law:

1 Imposition of Russian citizenship on residents of Crimea.

2 Forced deportations.

3 Conscription into the Russian military.

4 Changing the ethnic demography of Crimea.

Alla Hurska (2021) points out:

According to Article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and Article 8(2)(b)(viii) of the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), 'the transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies' is completely prohibited and considered a war crime.

To Crimean Tatars, contemporary Russian ethnic engineering is reminiscent of Stalin's ethnic cleansing in 1944 and the replacement of Crimean Tatars by settlers from the Russian SFSR.

This book analyses the roots of the 2014 crisis in two ways. The first is the inability of Russians to accept an independent Ukraine which Paul D'Anieri (2019) shows has existed since 1991. Secondly, the stagnation of nationalism in Russia in the second half of the 1990s, and especially during

two critical junctures since 2000, into an inability to recognise an independent Ukraine and Ukrainian nation.

Putin (2021) has shown he has no understanding of Ukraine and Ukrainians (see Kuzio 2019; Razumkov Centre 2021b). More experts on contemporary Ukraine can be found in Poland, the UK, the USA, and Canada than in Russia where scholars, experts and policymakers are constrained by deeply held nationalistic stereotypes and myths of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Russian legal scholars and journals are not critical of Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea (Socher 2021, p. 203). Poland has a far larger number of experts and scholars on Ukrainian issues than has Russia. Russian political leaders, experts and scholars believe Ukrainian presidents should pursue the same eastern Slavic identity policies as those undertaken by Belarusian President Lukashenka and Ukraine should be a 'Belarus-2. ' As Wawrzonek (2021, p. 39) writes, Moscow requires Ukraine's 'passivity and the full acceptance of the vertical paternalistic model of relation between the state authorities and society. ' The clash between Russian myths of how Ukraine should resemble Belarus and reality on the ground of how Ukraine will never be a 'Belarus-2' led to the 2014 crisis and, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has seen, an inability to negotiate an end to the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Putin's historical mythology draws on 19th century Russian great power nationalist historical myths and Stalin's views on the nationality question. At the same time, as with Putin's approach to history in general, he manipulates history to suit his geopolitical goals and ignores unpleasant facts. Although Vladimir Lenin and Stalin did indeed differ in their approach to the nationality question in the former Tsarist Empire, at the same time the Soviet Union under Stalin was a champion of the principle of self-determination. Johannes Socher (2021, p. 26) writes: 'The successful introduction of the formula of self-determination as one of the principles of the United Nations in the Charter may therefore rightly be called a distinctive Soviet contribution. ' The Soviet Union under Stalin included the principle of self-determination as the basis for respect for human rights in not only the UN Charter but also the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights adopted in 1966 and going into effect a decade later (Socher 2021, p. 27). In the

decade following World War II, the Soviet Union ‘acted as a strong supporter of self-determination in the drafting process of all important international legal instruments that led to the juridification of the principle’ (Socher 2021, p. 54).

Stalin was as much of a hypocrite as is Putin today. Stalin promoted the principle of self-determination in the Western colonies but not in the Soviet Union while Putin supports the principle in the non-Russian former Soviet republics but not in the Russian Federation. Socher (2021, p. 35) writes that the Soviet Union was ‘one of the strongest and most aggressive supporters of self-determination outside its own sphere of influence in the context of decolonization...' Russia has recognised the ‘independence’ of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and the self-determination of Crimea but not that of Chechnya where the bloodiest of all secessionist conflicts in the former USSR had taken place (Socher 2021, p. 174).

Putin - like Stalin in the 1920s - believes Lenin was wrong to support the establishment of separate republics for Ukrainians and other non-Russian peoples and agrees with Stalin who supported the incorporation of the non-Russians as autonomous entities inside the Soviet Russian republic. Lenin’s opposition to Stalin’s proposal ‘put the Russians in the position of imperial masters, undermining the idea of the voluntary union of nations—and making them little better than the tsarist empire they had overthrown’ (Plokhy 2019). Stalin’s model, which Putin supports, ‘proposed a return to the ethnic inequality of the past’ (Plokhy 2019). Lenin accused Stalin of supporting Russian ‘great-power chauvinism’ (Plokhy 2019). In 2002, Putin proposed the Stalin variant to President Lukashenka of incorporating Belarus inside Russia, which he turned down. Putin has never given up on the idea of a union of Belarus and Ukraine with Russia and in the former case he has been successful.

Ukraine’s territory was defined in numerous Soviet legal documents and internationally. The Ukrainian SSR (Soviet Socialist Republic) was a founding member of the UN, one of three Soviet seats (the others being the USSR and Belarusian SSR). In 1954, Crimea joined Ukraine based on an official Soviet Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet which was confirmed into law through an amendment to the 1936 Soviet

constitution and included in article 72 in the 1977 Soviet and article 77 in the 1978 Ukrainian SSR constitutions. In July 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR proclaimed the ‘State Sovereignty of Ukraine as supremacy, independence, integrity, and indivisibility of the Republic’s authority within the boundaries of its territory, and its independence and equality in foreign relations. ’ The Declaration continued: ‘The Ukrainian SSR as a sovereign national state develops within the existing boundaries to exercise the Ukrainian nation’s inalienable right to self-determination. ’ In November 1990, based on their Declarations of Sovereignty, the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SFSR signed an agreement respecting each other’s territorial integrity (Socher 2021, p. 147). In August 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR declared:

Implementing the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine, the *Verkhovna Rada* [Supreme Soviet] of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic solemnly declares the Independence of Ukraine and creation of the independent Ukrainian state - UKRAINE. The territory of Ukraine is indivisible and inviolable.

In 1994, Russia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet republics in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) signed the Declaration on the Respect for Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity, and Inviolability of Borders (Socher 2021, pp. 95-96). In the same year, Russia (together with the UK and the USA), signed the Budapest Memorandum after Ukraine joined the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) which committed them to respecting the independence, sovereignty, and borders of Ukraine ‘in accordance with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act’ (Socher 2021, pp. 147, 199). The Soviet Union had insisted on the ‘inviolability of borders’ in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act as well as during discussions in 1990 about the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (Socher 2021, p. 55). In 1997 Ukraine and Russia signed a treaty recognising their border followed in 2003 by an agreement on its delimitation. In that same year, Russia and Ukraine signed an agreement on the Azov Sea and Kerch Straits (see Chapter 8; Socher 2021, p. 147). All of these Soviet and post-Soviet agreements were broken by Russia.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union was based on the 'principle of *uti possidets'* whereby former internal boundaries between Soviet republics became international borders. In addition, the Soviet Union's and Soviet Ukrainian constitutions only permitted republics - not autonomous republics - to secede (i. e., have self-determination). Similarly, after World War II the UN definition of self-determination only applied to colonies and not parts of their territories; for example, the secession of Biafra from Nigeria in the late 1960s was opposed by the UN. Putin (2014), who is not only an amateur historian but, it would also seem, an amateur international legal expert, justified Crimea's secession from Ukraine by referring to the UN Charter 'which speaks of the right of nations to self-determination, ' adding the nonsensical comparison that if Ukraine used this right then why should Crimea be denied it. Should we take Putin's logic further by claiming the 22 autonomous republics of the Russian Federation also have a right to 'self-determination'?

The 'principle of *uti possidets'* was used in all the founding documents of the CIS which Russia signed. Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea denies the legitimacy of the Soviet 1954 Decree, ignores the 1990 and 1991 Soviet Ukrainian Declarations, broke international law and infringed countless CIS documents (see Socher 2021, pp. 95-96). Russian opposition politician Grigory Yavlinsky warned:

Putin's political doctrine is actually addressed to all the former republics of the USSR in terms of his attitude to their statehood and territorial integrity. In fact, the entire legal framework of relations with these states since 1991 is rejected. [24]

Putin challenges the 'principle of *uti possidets'* in five ways (Socher 2021, p. 170). The first is Putin sides with Stalin rather than Lenin in their debate over what to do with non-Russians. The second is Putin's more determined support for 'self-determination' of territories in Russia's neighbours, such as Crimea. In 2008, Russia recognised the 'independence' of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, although Russia did not annexe them. The third is defence of Crimea's 'self-determination' as a reaction to the Euromaidan Revolution and a coup d'etat in Kyiv which allegedly ended the existence of Ukraine as a functioning state. Socher (2021, p. 160) writes that in international law a

revolution and coup d'etat do not define whether a state continues to exist. Russia's use of military force was a violation of the UN Charter and constituted an act of aggression. The fourth is Crimea joined the Russian Federation based on an international treaty but Crimea was not a state and only states can conclude treaties under the Vienna Convention (Socher 2021, p. 168). Western legal scholars hold a 'broad consensus' that the situation in Crimea represents the 'forceful acquisition of territory by one state at the expense of another state, that is annexation illegal under international law' (Socher 2021, p. 169). Russia violated the UN Charter, and its invasion and annexation is defined as 'aggression' under the 1974 Definition of Aggression. Russia's military aggression against Ukraine constituted an unlawful threat of force which is prohibited by the UN Charter while the Crimean referendum had no legal validity in the eyes of the UN and parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and Council of Europe (Socher 2021, pp. 160-161). The fifth is Putin's heavy use of 'historical-irredentist claims' and 'historical justice' which dominates over his legal arguments on Crimea (Socher 2021, p. 192). Putin uses an 'official Russian narrative of why "Crimea is Ours"; in which legal reasoning is replaced by a rhetoric of historical and nationalist claims' (Socher 2021, p. 176). Putin's territorial claims towards Ukraine heavily use 'historical-irredentist' and 'historical justice' arguments which are 'irrelevant for matters of international law' (Socher 2021, p. 202). The use of 'eclectic historical claims' is a Russian exercise in the promotion of 'hegemonic power' over Ukraine (Socher 2021, p. 176).

The use of these historical arguments begs the question how far back in history should countries go? Putin's historical arguments are based on the twin myths of 'Kievan Russia' as the first 'Russian' state and Russian Orthodoxy tracing its roots to the Christianisation of Kyiv Rus in 988. As Chapter 5 demonstrates, if Putin continued supporting the 1990s evolution of a post-imperial Russian history where Russia and Ukraine have separate histories and the origins of Russia are to be found in Novgorod and Vladimir-Suzdal (Tolz 2002), he would be not obsessed with Ukraine (Zygar 2016, p.85) and a Russian-Ukrainian war would be not taking place. Only 8 percent of Ukrainians uphold Putin's mythical view of 'Kievan Russia' as the 'first Russian state' while three quarters of Ukrainians believe Ukraine is the sole inheritor of Kyiv Rus (Rating Sociological Group 2021b).

Ukraine's annual holiday on 28 July commemorates the Christianisation of 'Kyivan Rus-Ukraine' (Zelenskyy 2021a) and Ukraine's statehood beginning 1,000 years ago in Kyiv Rus (Zelenskyy 2021b, 2021c) - an assertion which had been made three decades ago in Ukraine's August 1991 Declaration of Independence. Zelenskyy (2021c) draws on Ukrainian national historiography to claim the legacy of Kyiv Rus is inherited by the Galician-Volhynian Principality (i.e., not Vladimir Suzdal and Muscovy), Ukrainian Cossack states, Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) and Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) in 1917-1921, Carpatho-Ukraine in 1938-1939 and contemporary Ukraine. On the 30th anniversary of Ukrainian independence in August 2021, Zelenskyy (2021b) said:

We are the heirs of the statehood that existed more than a thousand years ago. And we are beginning to celebrate the Day of Ukrainian Statehood (Zelenskyy 2021c). We consider the year of Kyiv's foundation to be its starting point. The capital of Kyivan Rus-Ukraine is rightly called the city where it all began. Orthodoxy originated here, the Old Slavonic language originated here, and its successor is the modern Ukrainian language. This is where our statehood began. We will celebrate the birth of our statehood on the day of the flowering of our statehood - on the Day of the Christianisation of Kyivan Rus-Ukraine.

Putin also claims that Russian speakers in Crimea were threatened by Ukrainian 'nationalists' and 'fascists' who came to power in the 'Euro-maidan putsch.' There is no evidence of threats to Russian speakers documented in the April 2014 report on Ukraine and Crimea by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR).[25] In Spring 2014, the Council of Europe also did not find evidence of a threat to Russian speakers in Ukraine but was concerned over the plight of Crimean Tatars.[26]

The Soviet Union from its inception until its disintegration recognised Ukrainians as a separate people to Russians, allocated Ukrainians their own republic, demanded Ukraine receive a seat at the UN when it was founded, and codified Ukrainian as a language. This represented progress on the Tsarist Empire and White Russian emigres who denied the existence of Ukrainians by labelling them as 'Little Russians,' one of three groups which made up a panRussian nation, and derided Ukrainian as a dialect of

the Russian language. Putin agrees with Tsars, White Russian emigres, and Stalinists that Ukrainians do not exist, and they should therefore never have had a Soviet republic.

Putin the amateur historian showed the extent to which the Russian president's views have stagnated from the Soviet to the Tsarist view of the Ukrainian question (Putin 2021). Putin, the Kremlin, and the Russian media have for over a decade repeatedly stated there is no Ukrainian nation.[27] 70 percent of Ukrainians disagreed with Putin's (2021) central argument of Russians and Ukrainians constituting 'one people' with only 12.5 percent agreeing, including 58.8 and 52.4 percent, respectively, in the South and East, 74 percent in the Centre, and 90.4 percent in the West of the country. In Ukraine, 49 percent of ethnic Russians, 72.5 percent of ethnic Ukrainians, 55.5 percent of Russian speakers and 80.6 percent of Ukrainian speakers disagreed with Putin (Razumkov Centre 2021b).

Putin is nostalgic for a mythical time when there were 'Little Russians' because Russians and Ukrainians are 'one people' and Ukraine is an 'artificial construct'[28] created by Western countries bent on pursuing an antiRussian conspiracy to divide the 'pan-Russian nation.' Such views would have been applauded by Tsars and White Russian generals whose remains Putin re-buries in Russia, and books and articles he loves to read and quote. The election of an actor - Zelenskyy - as Ukrainian president confirmed in Putin's mind that Ukraine is not a real and sovereign country. Former Assistant to the President of the Russian Federation Surkov said, 'Ukrainians are very well aware that for the time being, their country does not really exist' (Foy 2021). Zelenskyy was elected on 21 April 2019 and only three days later in a slap in his face Putin issued a decree[29] on the issuing of passports to Ukrainian citizens in the DNR and LNR.

Putin (2021) does not recognise Ukraine as having a history separate to Russians because he does not see Ukrainians as having agency and the right to stand up to Russia. As shown by the failure of the Kremlin's 'New Russia' project in 2014 (see Kuzio 2019), Ukraine's internal dynamics are incomprehensible to Putin (2021). Putin (2021) does not believe Ukraine has a right to exist outside the Russian World, a viewpoint with a dangerous precedent from the 1930s. The narrative of Ukraine as an 'anti-Russian

project' 'sounds uncomfortably like Adolf Hitler's 15 March 1938 speech in Vienna, announcing the Anschluss of Austria.' An independent Austria, like an independent Ukraine, were being used by foreign powers to impede the rise of a great Germany and great Russia respectively. Anschluss with Austria defeated the 'anti-German' project, in the same manner as presumably 're-unification' with Russia would mean Ukraine would no longer act as an 'anti-Russia' project (Bershidsky 2021). In pursuit of a greater Germany, the Nazi's denied the existence of an Austrian nation and in pursuit of 'Holy Rus', contemporary Russian nationalists and neo-Nazis deny the existence of a Ukrainian nation. No Ukrainian nationalist organisation, no matter how extreme, ever denied the existence of the Russian nation. Putin's (2021) article, not coincidentally, was published soon after the 2021 Russian national security doctrine and both are imbued with conspiracy mindsets and paranoia found in the worldview of the Soviet and Russian secret services.

Putin's obsession with Ukraine makes his views dangerous and portends a potential escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war with Russia. Surkov openly stated that until Ukraine pursues the internal policies Russia is demanding (i.e., those implemented by Lukashenka's Belarus) 'the fight for Ukraine will never cease, it may die down, it may flare up, but it will continue, inevitably' (Foy 2021). Peter Dickinson believes the 'Russian leader's article reads like a justification for an even larger war.'[30] An investigation into seven years of the Russian-Ukrainian war by the Russian independent newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* concluded that 'while the escalation of the conflict is used as an instrument of political pressure, the next aggravation or even the transition of the war into a hot phase is a matter of time.'[31] President Zelenskyy does not rule out the scenario of a full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war.[32] 'Putin's essay is, in its redundant way, a declaration of war' against a Ukrainian state he sees as 'illegitimate and acts against the interests of its citizens because it is dominated by foreign actors, and that, to the extent that there is such a thing as Ukraine, it is a bandit state occupying "territorial gifts" of land that is legitimately Russia's.'[33] Putin believes that if Ukraine wishes to be independent it can only do so without the 'Russian' territories of Crimea and 'New Russia' (south-eastern Ukraine) and without the 'Polish' territories of Galicia and Volhynia.

Putin (2021) does not accept Ukraine's borders because he is adamant the country is an 'artificial' Soviet construct, writing that 'contemporary Ukraine was fully created by the Soviet epoch.'[34] But the same could be said about all 15 republics in the Soviet Union; indeed, territories which had ethnic Ukrainian majorities, such as the Kuban region which was settled from the 1790s by the *Viysko Zaporizke* (Zaporozhyan Cossack Army), were included in the Russian SFSR (see Kuzio 2009).[35] Ukraine left the USSR with less territory than it had ties to on the eve of joining the USSR, including the Transnistrian region (which had been the Moldovan Autonomous SSR in inter-war Ukrainian SSR) and the Kuban region.[36] Putin's complaint that 'they drew borders at will and handed out generous territorial "gifts"' could be applied to the Russian SFSR which added foreign territories from Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Germany, Japan, Mongolia, and other countries. If, as Putin believes, countries should have left the USSR with the same territories they joined, the Russian Federation would also be smaller.

What makes Putin's (2021) views on Ukraine more dangerous is when he writes 'We know and remember that to all intents and purposes she (i.e., Ukraine) was created at the expense of historical Russia' (Putin 2021). There is little question that this statement includes an indirect territorial claim to 'New Russia.' 75.7 percent of Ukrainians disagreed with Putin's (2021) claim that Ukraine includes 'historic Russian territories,' including 65 and 59.1 percent, respectively, in the South and East, 80.6 percent in the Centre, and 91.4 percent in the West of the country. In Ukraine, 55.7 percent of ethnic Russians in Ukraine, 77.9 percent of ethnic Ukrainians, 84.3 percent of Ukrainian speakers and 63.1 percent of Russian speakers disagree with Putin on this question. Even in the case of voters for the pro-Russian Opposition Platform - For Life party, more disagreed (44.9 percent) with Putin on this question than agreed (21.3 percent) with him (Razumkov Centre 2021b).

Putin (2021) is not merely writing as an amateur historian but as a Soviet-style ideological commissar laying the ideological groundwork for a possible escalation of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Russian military or other forms of aggression against Ukraine would lead to the biggest crisis in relations between the West and Russia since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis

and would have unforeseen consequences for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia, and central-eastern Europe. Ukraine is not Moldova or Georgia where Russian forces intervened in the early 1990s, and in the latter invaded in 2008. Ukraine is a huge territory; Tiraspol and South Ossetia are close to Chisinau and Tbilisi, respectively, whereas Donetsk is 750 kilometres from Kyiv. Ukraine has one of the largest armies in Europe. Invading and then subduing Ukraine would be practically impossible and require mobilisation of at least half of the Russian army which would be met by organised partisan resistance in Ukraine's regions and not by 'Little Russians' offering bread and salt to Russian 'liberators.'

It took Soviet leader Stalin, who had just won the Great Patriotic War, a decade to defeat the *Ukrayinska Povstanska Armiya* (Ukrainian Insurgent Army - UPA) in western Ukraine in the mid-1950s. In 2014-2015, Ukraine's numerous volunteers turned the tide of the war and were defeating the Donbas separatists, forcing Russia to supply anti-aircraft missiles, one of which - a BUK - shot down flight MH 17 in July 2014 killing 298 passengers and crew; Russia subsequently invaded Ukraine in August 2014. Since 2014, Ukraine has built a modern and well-equipped army with US javelin anti-tank weapons and Turkish drones (UAVs - Unmanned Aerial Vehicles).

A war with Ukraine would destroy the myth Putin has fed to the Russian people of a 'civil war' taking place in Ukraine. The annexation of Crimea has always been popular in Russia where it is supported by between 84 and 86 percent of the population because Crimea and Sevastopol have a high degree of symbolism in Russian historical mythology. A war with Ukraine over 'New Russia,' - a term Putin had revived in 2014 but everybody, including Russians, had forgotten - will be unpopular inside Russia. Unlike Ukrainians, most Russians continue to believe Ukrainians are a 'brotherly people.' When Ukrainians were asked who their country's allies would be assisting in the defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, only six percent answered this would be Russians compared to 44.1 and 41.9 percent, respectively, who believed it would be the US and NATO (Razumkov Centre 2021a). Therefore, a war with Ukraine could have unforeseen consequences for Putin's regime itself.

During Putin's presidency for life (officially until 2036) there are five possibilities for military or other forms of increased hybrid warfare actions against Ukraine. Ominously, Putin's (2021) article is to be studied by soldiers in the Russian armed forces.[37]

The first is that Russia may annex the DNR and LNR (see Twickel 2021). Zelenskyy has said the distribution of Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens in the DNR and LNR is the first step towards annexation of these territories.[38] By the end of 2021, Russia will have illegally distributed 1 million passports to Ukrainians in the DNR and LNR[39] out of a combined population of 3.6 million. These 'Russian citizens' were encouraged to obtain Russian social insurance numbers allowing them to vote on-line in Russia's September 2021 elections.[40] Towards the goal of Russia's annexation of the DNR and LNR, the Kremlin's information warfare has focused on five themes: [1]

Putin (2021) blames Ukraine for failing to implement the Minsk agreements which flows logically in his eyes from the country being a 'fascist' regime which came to power during the Euromaidan Revolution and turned Ukraine into a puppet state of the West. The only political force which would agree to Russia's demand for a peace agreement on the Donbas and recognition of Russian sovereignty over Crimea would be the pro-Russian Opposition Platform - For Life which has no possibility of winning presidential or parliamentary elections. Zelenskyy has raised Russian occupation of Crimea more virulently than his predecessor Petro Poroshenko.[42] Faced with this impasse, Putin could recognise the 'independence' of the DNR and LNR, as Russia did of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008, and in the process undertake a limited incursion to attempt to expand their territories to the entire Donbas.

The second is that Putin adamantly believes 'New Russia' is 'Russian' land which Ukraine has forfeited after Ukrainian nationalists came to power in the Euromaidan Revolution and transformed Ukraine into an 'anti-Russian project' and puppet state of the West. Ukraine's very existence as an independent country outside the Russian World is viewed by the Kremlin as evidence of the existence of an 'anti-Russian project.'

Putin (2021) wrote, ‘I am convinced that true Ukrainian sovereignty is only possible in partnership with Russia.’ This view is not new and has been long held by Russian elites. In August 1991, just ahead of the USSR’s disintegration, President Boris Yeltsin’s press secretary warned that Ukraine’s borders would be only recognised if it remained within the USSR. In the 1990s this became the proposal of Russia accepting Ukrainian independence on the condition that it remained within the Russian-led CIS and 2000’s under Putin in the Russian World. As Chapter 8 shows, Russia made territorial claims towards Crimea throughout the period from January 1992 to its invasion in February 2014.

The third is Putin’s goal of entering Russian history as the ‘gatherer of Russian lands’ would be a failure if he forever lost Ukraine. This idea germinated during his term as prime minister (2008-2012) and was implemented from 2012 with the assistance of Ukraine’s most pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk. Politics is personal for Putin and Zelenskyy’s crim-inalisation of Medvedchuk (banning of his three television channels - 112, NewsOne, ZiK), whose daughter has the Russian president as her Godfather, is viewed as an attack on Russia’s interests in Ukraine. There cannot be a Russian World without Ukraine as Kyiv is the ‘Mother of Russian cities’ and ‘Kievan Russia’ is the birthplace of the ‘Russian people’ composed of three parts in the pan-Russian nation.

The core of the Soviet Union consisted of the three eastern Slavs who made up two thirds of the population, most Soviet leaders, the military, and KGB officers. On 8 December 1991, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus dissolved the USSR and only on 21 December were nine Soviet republics informed that the USSR no longer existed (the Soviet Union had recognised the independence of the three Baltic republics in September 1991) (Socher 2021, pp.95-96). The core of the Eurasian Economic Union is the Russian World. For the above to function, Ukraine should act in the same manner as Belarus and Ukrainian presidents pursue the same identity policies as Lukashenka. In the Kremlin’s hardened mindset, Ukraine should pursue eastern Slavic (i.e., Soviet) nation building policies with a common Russian Orthodox Church, history, and identity. Putin cannot accept religious autocephaly for Ukraine because he does not see Ukraine as an independent

state in the same manner as 14 countries outside the CIS who have national Orthodox Churches.

In July 2021, Ukraine adopted a law on ‘Indigenous Peoples’ in Ukraine drawn up by President Zelenskyy which clarified ethnic groups as indigenous as those having been formed in Ukraine and ‘do not have its own state formations outside Ukraine.’ In the Ukrainian mainland the only ethnic group this is applicable to is Ukrainians; Russians, Hungarians, Poles, and others have ‘state formations outside Ukraine.’ In Crimea, ‘Indigenous People’ are defined as Tatars, Karaites, and Krymchaks. The law simultaneously makes two clarifications. The first is a choice in favour of a Ukrainian over an eastern Slavic identity pursued by Lukashenka’s Belarus. The second refutes the myth that ‘Crimea was always Russian’ by denying that Russians are one of the peninsula’s indigenous people.[43] Just as American and Canadian history did not begin in 1607 and 1608 with the founding of Jamestown and Quebec, respectively, so too Crimean history did not begin in 1783 when the Russian Empire occupied Crimea (Kuzio 2020, pp.36-65). An eastern Slavic identity would include Russians alongside Ukrainians (in Ukraine) and Belarusians (in Belarus) as indigenous peoples. Zelenskyy’s law refutes Putin’s support for returning to the pre-Soviet concept of a ‘pan-Russian nation’ and shows he will never adopt the eastern Slavic identity policies pursued in Lukashenka’s Belarus.

The fourth factor is Russian control over ‘New Russia,’ in whatever form, would deny Ukraine access to the Black Sea in the same manner as Putin has already denied Ukraine access to the Azov Sea by building a bridge across the Kerch Strait. Russia may act to thwart Ukrainian attempts, with US and British assistance, to re-build its navy which was stolen and destroyed in 2014 when Russia invaded and annexed Crimea.

Russia has several options it could pursue in escalating the current hybrid war. These include not only military options but subversive support for political destabilisation, an increased campaign of disinformation, following completion of Nord Stream II increased threats to Ukraine’s energy security, and an expansion of cyber-attacks. Ukraine has experienced numerous Russian cyber-attacks since 2014, including *NotPetya*.[44] Military options include an incursion into Kherson region to take control of water

supplies to Crimea, blocking shipping from Odesa and Mykolayiv in the Black Sea region to the west of Crimea or using the Moldovan frozen conflict of Transnistria as a base to foment separatism in the city of Odesa and in the southern region of the *oblast.* Loss of control over its southern territories and access to the sea would prove Putin's thesis that Ukraine is an 'artificial' construct and unable to exist as a viable entity outside the Russian World.

The final factor is that Russia views its hegemonic control over Eurasia as the source of its recognition as a great power. As early as 1993 President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, and ever since, Russian leaders and state officials have insisted that the West recognise Russia's 'special powers' and 'special role' in Eurasia as its 'zone of interest and special responsibility' and 'zone of traditional influence' (Socher 2021, pp.9-10). Ukraine is central to the success of Eurasia as a driver of Russia as a great power because, as Putin has many times stated, it was the second largest economy and population in the USSR and has a large military-industrial complex. A Russian-Ukrainian union at the core of Eurasia would ensure a Russian great power would be respected and feared.

Putin's (2021) amateur history has no time for Ukraine's long periods of history outside Russian control and Ukraine's long ties to Europe. Ukraine's Orthodoxy was closely tied to Constantinople, has never been xenophobically anti-Western and was never tied to the state in the same manner as the Russian Orthodox Church. Putin (2021) cannot include in his 19th century Russian historical myths how the Tsarist Empire and Soviet Union repressed the Ukrainian nation, its national identity, and language because these do not fit into his stereotype of 'brotherly relations' between Russians and Ukrainians from time immemorial. He condemns Polonisation in western Ukraine but plays down the banning of Ukrainian language and culture by Tsarist Russia while ignoring Russification by the Soviet regime. Putin's deep admiration for Stalin means he must ignore the *Holodomor* which murdered over 4 million Ukrainians. In Putin's history, Ukrainians flowered in the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union.

In Putin's history, all Ukrainian national leaders from Cossack Hetman Ivan Mazepa in the first decade of the 18th century to the present day are

working for Westerners seeking to undermine the pan-Russian nation. Putin is only able to explain Ukrainian policies by searching for conspiracies fanned by Polish colonialists, Austrian imperialists, Lenin, and Ukrainian nationalists in cahoots with Nazis and the USA. Lumping this strange coalition of disparate groups in an anti-Russian conspiracy reflects Putin's paranoid and conspiratorial state of mind.

In blaming both sides and of course the West, Putin refuses to accept his own responsibility for the dire state of Russian-Ukrainian relations even though it was Russia which invaded and illegally annexed a neighbour's territory. Putin has obviously never read the numerous Ukrainian opinion polls on Russian-Ukrainian relations, Crimea and the war in eastern Ukraine which are cited in this book. Putin claims that 'Russia did everything to halt bloodshed' in eastern Ukraine and Russia does not have territorial claims towards Ukraine.[45] This ignores Russia's imposition in 2012-2013 of tough trade sanctions against Ukraine and heavy-handed pressure to stop Ukraine signing an Association Agreement with the EU.

Since 2012-2013, Russia has undertaken a massive information warfare effort which flagrantly denigrates, ridicules, and denies the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians (see Minchenia, Tornquist-Plewa and Yurchuk 2018; Kuzio 2020, pp.66-81). Out of 12,000 cases in the *EUvsDisinfo* database, over 4,500 concern Ukraine, including 500 that question Ukraine's existence as a 'revanchist trope to support Russian imperialistic ambitions.'[46] Pyotr Tolstoy, the great-grandchild of the pacifist writer Leo Tolstoy, deputy speaker of Russia's State Duma and head of the Russian delegations to the Parliamentary Assemblies of both the OSCE and the Council of Europe, called for 'hanging the leaders of the Ukrainian revolution from the lamp posts' because Ukraine is a part of 'our greater Russia' and the peoples of Ukraine and Russia are 'one nation.'[47]

In not taking responsibility for Russia's actions towards Ukraine, Putin (2021) ignores the fact that Ukrainians no longer see Russians as their 'fraternal brothers.' Only 9 percent of Ukrainians view Russia as a 'friendly and brotherly' country towards Ukraine (Razumkov Centre and Sotsis Centre 2020). Two thirds of Ukrainians no longer see Russians as a

‘brotherly people’, including 52 and 46.5 percent in Ukraine’s South and East, respectively (Kulchytskyy and Mishchenko 2018, p.192).

This book analyses ten factors which have been present in Russian nationalist views of what constitutes ‘Russia,’ and Russian views as to what are its interests in Eurasia and Ukraine. Westernisers rose to prominence in Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s USSR and continued to have influence during the first three years of Yeltsin’s presidency. But this came to an end when tanks fired at the Russian parliament in October 1993. In 1994-1996, when Russia reinstituted annual 9 May military parades in celebration of victory in the Great Patriotic War, Russia transitioned to a Eurasian foreign policy under Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov. In 1996-1999, this transition towards Russian great power nationalism laid the groundwork for the election of Putin in 2000 and his domination of Russia ever since. The ‘red-brown’ (communist-fascist) coalition which had launched two failed coups d’etat in 1991 and 1993 came to power under Putin when it broadened to become a ‘red (pro-Soviet)-white (Tsarist and Orthodox fundamentalist)-brown (fascist)’ coalition (Laruelle 2016). Igor Girkin and Aleksandr Borodai, two central figures in the Spring 2014 ‘Russian Spring’ both fought for Russian proxies in the Transnistria region against Moldova and were members of the ‘red-brown’ parliamentary forces during the 1993 coup d’etat.

Russian great power nationalism has therefore dominated Russian foreign and defence policies for all but three years of the post-Soviet era. The USSR and Russia as a member of the ‘common European home’ lasted less than a decade from 1989 when it was first raised by Gorbachev to the mid-1990s under Yeltsin. Ten consistent factors of Russian nationalism are outlined below with an explanation of how these are viewed by Ukraine.

First, the disintegration of the USSR was viewed as both a catastrophe and a humiliation for Russia and Russians. In contrast, it was welcomed by Ukrainians because they received an independent state. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba (2021) wrote ‘for millions of people across the region, the Soviet Union’s collapse was not a catastrophe. It was a liberation.’

Second, Russia is a great power and its hegemony over Eurasia should be recognised by the West and accepted by Ukraine and other former Soviet non-Russian republics. Russia seeks a ‘Yalta-2’ summit where the West would recognise Russia’s exclusive sphere of influence over Eurasia, which would of course include Ukraine (Shtepa 2017; Felgenhauer 2021a).[48]

Of the 15 former Soviet republics, only Russia has true sovereignty and is the only ‘state-forming nation’ in Eurasia (O’Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016). The non-Russians are not full subjects of the international community, and their independence is belittled by Russia. There is no alternative to the re-integration of the former USSR because the non-Russian states cannot stand alone without Russian assistance and leadership (Goble 2015). Ukraine has guarded its sovereignty and has been a strong supporter of the territorial integrity of states; for example, by not recognising Kosovo’s independence.

Third, Russians viewed ‘Russia’ and the USSR as one and the same and held a limited allegiance to the Russian SFSR. In the 1990s a civic Russian identity found little support or understanding among Russians because most of them imagined ‘Russia’ to be bigger than the Russian Federation. From 1991, Ukraine undertook civic nation building within the borders it inherited from the Ukrainian SSR.

Fourth, Russia should pursue the twin goals of the ‘gathering of Russian (i.e., eastern Slavic) lands’ and integrating and reunifying Eurasia as a Union of Sovereign States, a revived USSR, integration within the CIS, a Russian-Belarusian union, Russian World, a CIS Customs Union, and a Eurasian Economic Union.

Ukrainian presidents never supported Russian-led political and security integration projects in the CIS and Eurasia. Five presidents have supported NATO membership with only Yanukovych opposed. All six Ukrainian presidents supported EU membership. No Ukrainian president, including Yanukovych, supported political, economic and security integration into the CIS and Eurasia. In response to Russian imperialism in Crimea and military aggression in eastern Ukraine, most Ukrainians now support membership of NATO and the EU and only a small minority back membership of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Fifth, *Russkii* (‘Russian’) is understood as both ethnic Russian and panRussian nation incorporating Great Russians, Little Russians (Ukrainians), and White Russians (Belarusians). Although the eastern Slavs are divided by ‘artificial’ borders, they are ‘one people’ encompassing a common Orthodox civilisation (Pankhurst 2020, p.167). Russian centrists, nationalists, and members of the ‘red-brown’ and ‘red-brown-white’ coalitions have found it either difficult to comprehend an independent Ukraine or have denied its legitimacy. The existence of a separate Ukrainian nation has been dismissed.

Opinion polls have always shown an overwhelming majority of Ukrainians, including Russian speakers, are patriots of their country.

Sixth, the Russian World is incomplete without Ukraine and, as Putin (2021) adamantly stated, Ukraine can only exist in a close relationship with Russia. The Russian World is a contemporary incarnation of the ‘first Russian state’ (‘Kievan Russia’) from which Russians and Ukrainians emerged and created a common civilisation. Attempts by Russians and Ukrainians to live together have been opposed by ‘nationalist,’ ‘neo-Nazi,’ and ‘Russophobe’ western Ukrainians and their Western puppet masters seeking to divide the ‘pan-Russian nation.’ Russian great power nationalists believe western Ukrainians are ‘professional traitors of Slavs since ancient times’ (O’Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016, p.754). Ukrainian historiography treats Ukraine with its own history separate to Russia. Ukrainian historians and most Ukrainians view Kyiv Rus as the first Ukrainian state.

Seventh, Ukraine’s territorial integrity is only guaranteed by Russia if it continues to remain within the Russian sphere of influence (under Yeltsin) and the Russian World (under Putin). Ukraine exists within its borders at Russia’s behest and if Ukraine leaves the Russian World some of its territories will ‘return’ to Russia (Judah 2015, p.XVI). ‘New Russia’ was *de facto* seen as being on ‘loan’ from a paternalistic Russian father to his Ukrainian child as long as Kyiv behaved. If Ukraine did not behave Russia would demand the ‘loan’ be repaid. These threats were actioned in Spring 2014 when Russia claimed there was a power vacuum in Kyiv and Ukraine had turned its back on the Russian World. In 2014, Putin’s ‘love’

transformed into invasion, annexation, and war. A large majority of Ukrainians believe Crimea and its south-eastern regions are Ukrainian territory.

As early as 1997, Eurasianist and neo-fascist Aleksandr Dugin in his book *Osnovy geopolitiki: geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii (Foundations of Geopolitics: The Geopolitical Future of Russia)* described Ukraine as an 'artificial' construct which should be dismembered. 'Ukraine,' Dugin wrote, should not include Crimea and the port of Sevastopol which have 'always' been Russian since the days of 'Kievan Russia' (Kyiv Rus). Crimea and the Donbas are viewed as 'geopolitical outposts of Russia' (Lennon and Adams 2019, p.21). Central Ukraine ('Little Russia') and south-eastern Ukraine ('New Russia') are inalienable parts of the Russian World. Western Ukraine is not part of the Russian World because it developed under Western influences. A large majority of Ukrainians have always supported their country's territorial integrity.

Eighth, in the Soviet Union the Ukrainian language was equated with backwardness and rural life and portrayed as having no future. Russian was the language of industrialisation, urbanisation, modernity, and progress. The future *Homo Sovieticus* (Soviet man) would be Russian speaking. Nevertheless, the Soviet regime never denied the existence of the Ukrainian language. Post-Soviet Russia denies the existence of the Ukrainian language and portrays it as a dialect of Russian. Ukrainians never accepted this and have taken affirmative action since 1991 to improve the standing of Ukrainian. The 2019 language law has support in all regions of Ukraine with 79.1 percent agreeing Ukrainians should know the state language, 82.3 percent stating that officials should use the state language at work, including 82.1 and 62.7 percent in southern and eastern Ukraine, respectively (see Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2021a). In July 2021, the Constitutional Court recognised the law as 'constitutional' (Constitutional Court 2021). 79.1 percent believe Ukrainians should know the state language, including 65.2 and 71.3 percent in southern and eastern Ukraine, respectively. 77.2 percent believe Ukrainian should be used for teaching in educational institutions, including 68 and 50.2 percent in southern and eastern Ukraine, respectively (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2021a).

Russian leaders have always complained about ‘Ukrainianisation’ and repression of Russian speakers. The roots of these Russian claims lie in a chauvinistic unwillingness to accept affirmative action for the Ukrainian language and its equality with Russian (Fournier 2002). No Ukrainian opinion polls have ever shown the existence of widespread discrimination against the Russian language.

Ninth, in the 1990s, chauvinism towards Ukraine remained on the margins of Russian political life. The reintegration of Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre great power nationalism during Putin’s first two critical junctures has led to Russian chauvinism becoming prominent in the Russian media and the Kremlin’s information warfare against Ukraine.

Russian political leaders and nationalists believe they are fighting a proxy war with the West in Ukraine. Surkov is incandescent about Russia’s actions in Ukraine in 2014, saying: ‘I am proud that I was part of the reconquest. This was the first open geopolitical counter-attack by Russia [against the West] and such a decisive one. That was an honour for me’ (Foy 2021). Pavel Felgenhauer (2021b) writes that ‘Moscow sees today’s Ukraine as a hostile Western proxy and a failed state—making it a potentially weak link in the fence the West is allegedly building around Russia.’ Russian nationalistic views of Ukrainian leaders as Western ‘puppets’ (Gaufman 2020, p.59) are also evident among some Russian experts working for Western think tanks and Western scholars. Trenin describes Ukraine as a ‘ward’ (i.e., puppet) of the West and blames President Zelenskyy for the April 2021 crisis when Russian built up a huge army on Ukraine’s borders. Cohen (2019, p.145) describes then US Vice President Joe Biden as Ukraine’s ‘pro-consul overseeing the increasingly colonized Kyiv.’ Meanwhile, President Poroshenko was not a Ukrainian leader but ‘a compliant representative of domestic and foreign political forces’ who ‘resembles a pro-consul of a faraway great power’ running a ‘failed state’ (Cohen 2019, p.36).

These chauvinistic views have deep roots. Vera Tolz (2001, p.232) described how Russians always viewed Ukrainian separatism ‘as the result of intrigues by European powers and/or the United States (i.e., the West).’ Ukrainians are an ‘artificial’ construct created by Austrians, Poles, and

other Westerners to divide the pan-Russian nation (Abibok 2018). The idea of an independent Ukraine is a 'Western project' and therefore 'anti-Russian' by its very nature.

Kremlin press spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Ukraine was a 'project of Western countries.'[49] Russia's state-controlled media claim that 'The West created Ukraine to wage war on Russian civilisation.'[50] 'In fact, the Ukrainian state is nothing more than an entity created by external forces on the territory of Russia as an anti-Russian (vehicle). And without this anti-Russian ideology, without Russophobia, this state loses its meaning.'[51] It would seem some Russian and Western scholars and experts agree with one another.

The West inflames tensions and provoke crises with Russia through its Ukrainian puppet state. Russian information warfare claims that Ukraine is a 'third rate colony' and a 'colony' of the EU, Ukrainians are 'cheap slaves' for the IMF, the CIA controls the SBU, NATO seeks to transform Ukraine into a buffer state, and NATO and the EU use Ukraine as an anti-Russian training ground. Since the 2014 'coup d'etat,' the West dictates appointments to official positions in Ukraine, controls the Ukrainian economy and exploits its resources. Ukraine is fighting a war in the Donbas and Zelenskyy is militarising Ukraine for the purpose of continuing to receive Western assistance (see Kuzio 2020, pp.82-105).[52] Russian information warfare claims that Ukraine is incapable of undertaking the reforms required for European integration and anyway, Ukrainians are not wanted by the EU and NATO and Ukraine will therefore eventually return to the Russian World.

Tenth, Russian values and Eurasian civilisation are superior to decadent Western values whose civilisation is in decline. A 'decaying West' is one of the key narratives in pro-Kremlin disinformation which draws on deeply imbedded Russian nationalistic views of Russia and its relationship to the West. Alexander Solzhenitsyn condemned Western decadence during his exile in 1974-1994 in the West. Europe is on the verge of collapse from migrants, LGBT rights and liberals while Russia is the last bastion of decency fighting the onslaught of Satan.[53] Ukrainians are feminised as 'gay men' or 'loose women' because of their desire to integrate into *'Gavropa'*

(Foxall 2017). Russia and other members of the Russian World have nothing to learn from the West and are destined to take their own unique Eurasian path. During Putin's presidency the proportion of Russians who do not consider themselves to be Europeans has nearly doubled from 36 percent in 2008 to 64 percent in 2021.[54] Ukraine's integration into the West is a betrayal of the superior values and civilisation in the Russian World and Eurasia.

Ukrainians have never agreed with Russian nationalists about a 'decadent' West and, as witnessed during the Euromaidan Revolution, believe Ukraine should embrace and apply European values to their country. Widespread anti-Americanism has never existed in Ukraine.

This book has eight chapters divided between three sections and a conclusion. In the first section, Chapters 1 and 2 analyse Russian-Ukrainian relations and Russian nationalist attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians through theoretical and comparative perspectives.

The second section has three chapters. Chapter 3 analyses White Russian emigre nationalist attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians and how Russian emigres were dominated by great power nationalists, imperialists, and chauvinists throughout most of the Cold War and in official and dissident Russian nationalism in the Soviet Union. Chapter 4 analyses the revival of Russian nationalism in the late Soviet era and early 1990s, the weakness of Russian liberals and inability to create national democratic political forces, and the growing domination of great power nationalism since 1994-1996. Chapter 5 investigates how great power nationalism transformed under President Putin to incorporate Tsarist and White Russian emigre views which deny the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians, and how this culminated in the 2014 crisis.

The third section includes three chapters. Chapter 6 analyses the attitudes of the 'red-white-brown' coalition of Soviet and Tsarist nostalgists and neo-Nazis towards Ukraine and Ukrainians. Chapter 7 analyses the views of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian World towards Ukraine and Ukrainians. Chapter 8 investigates Russian nationalist views and policies towards Crimea and 'New Russia.' Chapter 9's conclusion summarises the analyses in the previous eight chapters.

1

Bring Donbas Home!

2 Ukraine is Preparing a Genocide!

3 Ukraine is Preparing an Attack Against Donbas!

4 Ukraine is Shelling Villages, Killing Children!

5 Since This Morning, We Are Returning the Fire![41]

Notes

1 This was this author's experience at the University of London's SSEES (School of Slavonic and East European Studies) in the mid-1980s and the Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies, Birmingham University, in the 1990s.

2 This amusing story was told to me by the Ukrainian lady who ran the bookstore at that time.

3 https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-57795642.

4 I asked Vera Tolz (12 March 2021) whether *obshcherusskiy narod* should be translated as pan-Russian nation or pan-Russian people: 'The word *narod* usually has a broader meaning than *natsiia* and usually is translated as "people." However, in some instances *narod* is used as a synonym for *natsiia* and basically means nation. Sometimes the distinction is not clear. So, in sum, "people" is marginally preferable, particularly with reference to pre-1991 usage in most contexts, but nation is also acceptable. I think the equation of *narod* and *natsiia* usage became stronger post 1991.' Because I am analysing Russian nationalism and Ukraine in the post-1991 era, I have used pan-Russian nation throughout the book.

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8 *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 1, 6, 9 April 2021.

9 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/after-trying-to-incite-genocide-in-donbas-ukraine-wil l-disappear-from-the-map.

10 https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-break-cultural-gridlock-ukraine-189505.

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Part I: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives

1 Civic, ethnic, or civic-ethnic states

A discussion of theoretical concepts

There is no Ukraine. There is Ukrainianism. That is, a specific disorder of minds. Surprisingly brought about by extreme degrees of fascination with ethnography. Such bloody local history. Confusion instead of the state. There is borscht, Bandera, and the bandura. But there is no nation. The brochure 'Independent Ukraine' exists, but Ukraine does not. The only question is if Ukraine is still there, or not any longer?... I believe there is no Ukraine yet. But over time, it will appear. However, what kind of Ukraine will it be, within which borders will it exist and even, perhaps, how many Ukraine's there will be are open questions. Russia will have to participate in one way or another in solving these issues.

Former Assistant to the President of the Russian Federation,

Vladislav Surkov (2020)

Since 1991, Russian political leaders and intellectuals have failed to develop a vision for a post-imperial Russian nation-state. Instead, they have aligned with Russian nationalists in supporting a Russian 'imagined community' which is larger than the Russian Federation, using Benedict Andersen's (2006) theory of nationalism. Andersen (2006) believes 'imagined communities' are socially constructed in the modern era by people who see themselves as part of a larger nation which is grounded in ancient myths. In Russia's case, the 'imagined community' was never the Russian SFSR or the Russian Federation but believed to be much larger in the form of the USSR, the CIS, a pan-Russian nation and the Russian World, and the Eurasian Union.

Importantly, during Putin's presidency Russian views of Ukraine and Ukrainians have regressed to Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre denials of the existence of Ukraine and the chauvinistic view of Ukrainians

as one of three branches of the pan-Russian nation. Putin's regime has become increasingly authoritarian at home and militaristic abroad. During the same period of time, Ukraine has followed the trajectory of central-eastern European post-communist states in pursuing civic nation building and democratisation within its borders inherited from the former USSR. Russia and Ukraine have approached nation building and minority rights in very different ways. Russia believes Ukraine should pursue the eastern Slavic nationality policies undertaken in the USSR and continued in Lukashenka's Belarus. Ukraine has implemented what Stephen Shulman (2005) describes as 'ethnic Ukrainian' in contrast to 'eastern Slavic' nationality policies, while Ukrainian history has been written based on the civic nation-state model commonly found in European historiography (i.e., histories of countries are those of the territory of nation-states). This chapter integrates the ethnic versus civic state debate within Russian and Ukrainian political thinking, nation and state building and national identities.

Pluralism and multiculturalism have not always had support on the left and among liberals. American progressive thinkers promoted national integration before 1914 to integrate the influx of large numbers of immigrants to the USA (Lieven 2016, p.10). Since the 1960s, North American and Western European nation-states have increasingly defined their nation-states in a pluralistic manner. The majority of scholarly contributions in this field have discussed this normatively, arguing in favour of pluralism and multi-culturalism (Kymlicka 1996, 1997; Rex 1997; Smolicz 1988, 1998) or against and in support of assimilation and integration. This dichotomy has come under criticism from a wide variety of theoretical and comparative perspectives (Delafenetre 1997; Fierlbeck 1996; Hjern 2000; Kukathas 1992; Lecours 2000; Nickel 1994; Parekh 1995, 1997; Snyder 2000). Following the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London in July 2005 the British Labour Party moved the UK away from multiculturalism to integration.

Challenging the traditional static view of Western civic states is a growing body of scholarly work which argues that the growth of pluralism within nation-states is a long-term trend which has been taking place since the late 18th century (Breton 1988; Brown 1999; Foner 1998; Kaufmann 1999, 2000a, 2000b, Kuzio 2001a, 2002; Smith, R.M. 1997; Yack 1996). This

body of scholarship disagrees with the static model developed by Hans Kohn (1940, 1944, 1982) of a Western civic versus Eastern ethnic nationalism (Kuzio 2002) which is still used by some policy makers, scholars and journalists (see Ignatieff 1993; Freedland 1998).

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first discusses the relationship between nationalism and the nation-state through a dynamic model of a balance between ethno-cultural and civic elements which are changing over time. The second integrates this discussion with Russian nationalism supporting a larger 'imagined community' (Andersen 2006) of empire or union over a nation-state. This section points to the weakness of Russian liberalism and the inability to establish national democratic groups - reoccurring themes throughout the book - which have been therefore unable to oppose and compete with great power nationalism. The third section debates how insecure nationalisms have competed with the growth of inclusivity and pluralism in nation-states. Insecure Russian nationalism pervades President Putin's political system and drives its military aggression against Ukraine. The final section discusses the ways in which nation-states have become more inclusive and pluralistic in citizenship and the vote, immigration and multiculturalism and applies the evidence to Russia and Ukraine.

Nationalism and nation-states

The static model

The framework developed by Kohn (1944) of a Western civic nationalism different in origin, essence and form to that of Eastern ethnic nationalism was the standard framework to understand nationalism for much of the post-war era. Kohn's (1944) static framework argued that Western states were civic from their inception in the late 18th century.

Kohn (1940, 1944, 1982) believed Western nationalism was inherently different because it evolved in conjunction with political rights and was therefore civic. This civic nationalism owed more to territorial than ethno-cultural factors. It was also inclusive in the sense of allowing anybody within the given territory of a nation-state to become a citizen, irrespective

of ethnicity, race or gender. The civic nationalism that developed in Kohn's West was individualistic, liberal, rational and cosmopolitan. The roots of Western nationalism lay in the age of enlightenment, liberty, the rule of law and individualism. In the American and French revolutions, individual liberty played a predominant role in mobilising revolutionaries. The American national idea, for example, was based on individual liberty and tolerance which overcame ethnic differences (Kohn 1982, p.64).

Eastern nationalism was defined by Kohn as backward looking, prone to conflict, tribal and irrational. Eastern nationalism was primitive because it focused its energy on building a new national identity and was tied to religion, language and nationality. It lacked a 'high culture' and therefore focused upon ethno-cultural issues (Gellner 1983; Smith, A.D. 1996, pp.77-83).

Kohn (1940, 1944, 1982), Gellner (1983) and other scholars believed it was inevitable that the East would tend towards creating authoritarian and culturally repressive systems while the West would establish liberal democratic states. This trend was also inevitable because of backward socio-political and socio-economic levels of development in the East which lacked a large bourgeois and was more closely bound up with absolutist regimes.

As seen since the fall of communism in 1991, this has not been the case and central-eastern Europe, the three Baltic states, and Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia have created democracies. However, Kohn's framework is possibly applicable to Russia and most former Soviet republics which have become authoritarian regimes.

Eastern nationalism was more prone to ethnic conflict because it inevitably had to resort to a greater degree of historical myth making, which we see in Russia (see Chapters 6 and 7). Nationalistic regimes sustain themselves with domestic and foreign enemies (Shevtsova 2014), again an inherent feature of Putin's Russia. In a climate of state sponsored Ukrainophobia, Russian occupation authorities in Crimea are perennially in search of Ukrainian 'spies' and 'diversionary' agents (Moyseyeva 2021). Russia has initiated or supported through proxies eight military conflicts in Azerbaijan, Georgia (in the early 1990s and 2008), Moldova, Chechnya (in the 1990s

and early 2000s), Crimea, and eastern Ukraine. Putin has plunged Russia into three wars and caused the worst crisis in relations with the West since World War II. Russia's enemies include an internal 'treacherous' opposition in the pay of Western intelligence agencies while on the external front, Russian leaders promote a state under siege from the West with whom it is fighting a proxy war in Ukraine. Russia's information war heavily targets Ukraine (Kuzio 2016).

Kohn (1982) believes the East was rife with border conflicts because the boundaries of nation-states did not coincide with ethnic groups and there were demands for border changes. Russian nationalists never viewed the borders of the Russian SFSR or Russian Federation as those of the Russian 'imagined community' (Andersen 2006), view Ukraine and Belarus as 'Russian' lands and Eurasia as its exclusive sphere of influence.

Kohn (1982) did not necessarily see the expansion of Western empires in negative terms. If the West possessed a 'superior civilisation' and a civic nationalism, contact between Western civic states and colonies would be beneficial to the latter. 'Through contact with the modern West, Asian civilizations and peoples were revitalized,' Kohn (1982, p.84) believed. England's liberal civilisation, 'infused a new spirit into Asia and later into Africa'.

Praise for Western colonialism is no longer acceptable in Western scholarship. This is not the case in Russia where Russian state officials and nationalists continue to claim the Tsarist Empire and the USSR were beneficial to the non-Russian peoples. Putin (2021) believes the Tsarist Empire and the USSR were beneficial to Ukrainians. These dubious claims lie at the heart of the concept of Eurasianism. Stephen Hutchings and Vera Tolz (2015, pp.162) write that Eurasianism is a substitute for decolonisation because it claims Russia has succeeded in managing ethnic diversity more successfully than Western empires. Russian rule was allegedly founded on mutual respect and brotherhood and not, as in Western empires, upon colonialism and repression. Consequently, 'Eurasianism treats Russia not as a colonial power, but as a community which is itself under threat of being colonized by the West' (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.162). Eurasianism has

never found support among Ukrainian political leaders, intellectuals and scholars.

A dynamic model

The static Kohn (1940, 1944, 1982) framework of nationalism failed to take into account the evolution of nation-states over time. It mistakenly argued that nation-states in the West had always been civic and did not therefore provide a dynamic framework which allowed for change over time. It is also held up the West as somehow superior because it allegedly had always been civic and was therefore the model to emulate. While Ukraine aspires to replace Russian and Soviet with European values, Russia is strongly opposet o such a step because it is adamant that eastern Slavic culture and Eurasianist civilisation are superior to what is found in the West.

In other words, Russian myths of a superior Eurasia are the reverse side of Kohn's claim of a superior 'civic' West (Kohn 1940, 1944, 1982). Xenophobic portrayal of the West as Russia's 'Other' has deep roots in Russian identity. Liah Greenfeld (1993, pp.254, 270) writes: 'The West was an integral, indelible part of the Russian national consciousness. There simply would be no sense in being a nation if the West did not exist.' The rejection of the West and state pressure for unity within 'Holy Rus' were inseparable, she believes. Yitzhak Brudny (1998, p.16) writes that 'anti-Western' ideology 'indirectly legitimised the Soviet regime.' Anti-Western xenophobia exploded into the international arena following Putin's February 2007 speech to the Munich Security Conference (Putin 2007). Nadezhda Arbatova (2019, p.8) describes Eurasianism as a means to 'justify' Russia's 'backwardness' and therefore an outgrowth of long-term Russian inferiority complexes with the West. Eur-asianism is a 'reactionary ideology, a superiority-inferiority complex and phantom imperialist pain' which embraces authoritarianism and imperial expansion as the alternative to modernisation, democratisation and reforms (Arbatova 2019, p.8). Anti-Western xenophobia, conspiracy mania and anti-Americanism are alien to Ukrainian political elites and intellectuals.

A dynamic model places greater emphasis on the link between democratisation and nation-building and discusses this within the context of a gradual evolution of nation-states over time into more inclusive communities. In

other words, it disagrees with the view that nation-states were always fully inclusive and civic from their inception. European, and North and South American countries had undertaken state and nation building at different periods of time to when they embarked on democratisation and market-isation. In southern Europe and Latin America, transitions to democracy in the 1970s and 1980s took place long after they had become independent states and forged nations. In some cases, such as Spain, national politics were re-organised during the democratic transition to accommodate a multinational country. In the UK, devolution to Scotland and Wales was introduced alongside a more flexible understanding of British identity.

Some post-communist states undertook ‘quadruple transitions’ of demo-cratisation, marketisation, and nation and state building simultaneously (see Kuzio 2001b). Ukraine views European integration as a means to modernise the country, in the same manner as Ireland, and southern and central-eastern Europe. Russia’s ‘quadruple transition’ faltered in the 1990s and regressed into stagnation under Putin, particularly since the summer 2020 constitutional changes.

The nation-state has always been a complicated marriage of convenience between nationalist particularism and liberal universalism and Ukraine has been more successful than Russia in achieving this balance. Traditional frameworks for discussing nationalism did not necessarily see this as a problem because Western nation-states were assumed to have always been civic in contrast to ethnic nation-states in the East. Such a framework does not explain developments in the 27 post-communist states since 1991.

When nationalism became an increasingly negative term after World War II the term ‘civic nationalism’ was replaced by the less evocative ‘patriotism,’ although the differences between the two are not always readily clear. As nation-states have become progressively more inclusive and pluralistic, nationalism has been buried deeper within Western public consciousness. Nationalism has not disappeared with the arrival of greater inclusivity and pluralism, it has merely become, in Michael Billig’s (1995) phrase, ‘banal.’ Civic nationalism in the West has become an everyday part of life in nation-states, although most would prefer to call it patriotism.

One person's patriot is another person's nationalist; Canadians and Mexicans, for example, have always seen their American neighbours as nationalists. Most Americans called themselves patriots, even when they were members of far-right neo-fascist and extremist groups of the type which staged the insurrection in Washington DC on 6 January 2021. Former US President Donald Trump challenged this discourse when he called himself a 'nationalist.'[1] Russian nationalists and Russian leaders frequently use the terms patriotism and patriots to describe themselves when they are really talking about nationalism and nationalists. Meanwhile, Soviet and Russian discourse about 'nationalists' in Ukraine refers to anybody on the left, centre and right who supports a Ukraine lying outside the USSR and the Russian World (see Kuzio 2016).

The static view of nationalism, identity and society has been challenged by a growing body of scholarly literature that investigates these phenomena within a more dynamic framework. This body of scholarship argues that in the early stages of nation-states, ethnic nationalism is stronger than the civic elements which are still in their early, embryonic stages of development. Over time, as democratisation is consolidated, institutions are crafted, the rule of law is established, and the right to vote is broadened to more groups, the proportional relationship between nationalist particularism and liberal universalist elements moves away from the former towards the latter. This evolution from ethnic to civic nationalisms is taking place in democratising post-communist states such as Ukraine, but not in consolidated authoritarian regimes such as Russia. A more civic variant of nationalism was weak in 1990s Russia (see Chapter 3) and transformed into more virulent, ethnic and great power nationalism in the second half of the 1990s and especially during Putin's presidency.

Tension between nationalist particularism and liberal universalism is never totally removed from nation-states because of the lack of congruency between 'cultural' and 'political' nationalism (Breuilly 1993, pp.54-72). 'The durability of the nation-state is because it mediates between "primordial bonds" and "abstract, universal humanity;" it is open to strangers while remaining "compact and contingent"' (Scobey 2001, p.24). This conflict between nationalist particularism and universal liberalism will always remain inherent to nation-states (Kaufmann 2000a, p.1103).

Since the 1960s there has been an accelerating trend towards a liberal universalist understanding of the nation-state as seen in its tolerance of greater cultural pluralism and inclusivity. The trend towards greater plurality does not necessarily mean we are reaching the end of the nation-state, as many scholars have long predicted (Kaldor 1996), in favour of the triumph of global universalism. A better way would be to see the nation-state as changing and adapting over time. As I have written (Kuzio 2002), there never have been and never can be fully civic states.

The rise in support for populist nationalism in the EU and the USA is partly in response to this growing pluralism and discontent with increased levels of immigration. Nevertheless, Ukraine's Western neighbour Poland has not combined populist nationalism with imperialism, unlike nationalist Russia. Hungarian pro-Russian populist nationalism does raise irredentism towards co-ethnics in neighbouring countries, including Ukraine.

Central and eastern Europe advanced over a shorter time frame than the West in developing civic states because their desire to 'return to Europe' required them to fulfil commitments to join NATO and the EU which are recognised as a strong stimulus for ruling elites to undertake unpopular reforms. This 'carrot' is influential in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, although they are offered integration but not membership, but it has never been influential in Russia which has not sought NATO or EU membership and has seen itself as part of Eurasia since the mid-1990s.

Today's French civic nationalism was a minority viewpoint over a century ago in France when it was espoused by the scholar Ernest Renan. 'The alternative, biological or social Darwinian interpretation probably commanded wider support amongst European intellectuals until the 1940s' (Hefferman, 2001, p.30). There was little support for 19th century writers such as Lord Emerich E.D. Acton who called for cultural pluralism. Western political thought, 'has shown little understanding or respect for the cultural diversity of mankind and has made scant allowance for it as a possible concern of government' (McRae 1979, p.685).

'Nationalistic history' of the kind used by France and Germany in their territorial disputes over Alsace-Lorraine was commonplace throughout western and eastern Europe and North America until the mid-20th century

(Francis 1997; Jones 2000; Smith, A.D. 1999; Spillman 1997). Historical textbooks which legitimised empires, ethnic superiority, prejudice, chauvinism, historical myths and social Darwinism were commonplace until the 1950s in the West. Although nationalist historiography declined into a minority viewpoint by the 1960s, 'the patriotic ideals towards which those writers strove are still with us today, in certain school textbooks, and also in the popular press and comics' (Kennedy 1973, pp.87-88). These ideas re-appear during elections, crises, wars and international sports events and have made a come-back alongside the rise of populist nationalism.

Nationalist historical myths never went away in Russia after 1991 when former Soviet nationality policies and historical myths were integrated with those revived from the Tsarist Empire and imported from White Russian emigre groups (see Chapter 5). These had an important influence as to how Russian nationalism viewed the West as 'decadent,' Ukraine as an 'artificial' state and Ukrainians as members of a pan-Russian nation, three myths which together led to the 2014 crisis.

Ethnic and civic nationalism

Advances in democratisation, inclusivity and plurality within nation-states are usually associated with civic nationalism while intolerance, racism and fascism are linked to ethnic nationalism. Nevertheless, the boundaries between civic and ethnic nationalism and inclusive and exclusive nation-states have been traditionally difficult to locate (Brown 1999). Civic democratic and authoritarian nation-states have *both* implemented discriminatory or repressive policies towards national minorities. The large Ukrainian minority which had existed in the Kuban region of the northern Caucasus was subjected to a Russification onslaught from the 1930s. The Russian SFSR *and* Russian Federation have pursued the Russification of Ukrainians, the republic's second largest national minority, by denying them any educational, religious, and cultural rights. There was no difference between 'civic' Yeltsin and 'nationalist' Putin in their attitudes towards the Russian Federation's Ukrainian minority. After 2014, the Ukrainian library in Moscow was closed and its ethnic Russian director, Natalia Sharina, given a four-year suspended sentence based on trumped-up charges of her being a 'Ukrainian nationalist.'

Western studies of Russian nationality policies have praised its devotion to ‘multiculturalism’ with Petro (2015) describing Russia under Putin as ‘multinational and multiconfessional.’ Federica Prina’s (2016) book on national minorities in the Russian Federation never once mentions Ukrainians. Rogers Brubaker applies his theory of ‘nationalising states’ only to non-Russian states in the former USSR - but never to Russia (Kuzio 2001a).

It is wrong and disingenuous to describe Russia as tolerant and ‘multiconfessional’ if it does not permit Ukrainian cultural facilities and educational opportunities and bans religious confessions in the Russian Federation and Russian occupied Crimea and Donbas. Russia and Ukraine have adopted illiberal and liberal policies, respectively, towards national minorities. Ukraine provided a range of liberal nationality policies for ethnic Russians, Russian speakers and other national minorities which received praise from the OSCE and the Council of Europe. These were codified in the Crimean Autonomous Republic. Only 5 percent of Ukrainians believed Russian military aggression against their country was due to the violation of the rights of Russians speakers, the reason Putin gave for Russian intervention in Crimea (Razumkov Centre 2017). The Ukrainian language has been removed from educational institutions, Russification has been re-introduced and Ukrainian religious confessions are banned in Russian occupied Crimea and the DNR and LNR. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) called for Russia to be added to the world’s ‘worst violators’ of religious freedom alongside Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and six other countries.[2] In stark contrast, Ukraine is a beacon of religious diversity and tolerance (Vovk 2020, pp.46-48).

Claims of an allegedly more tolerant Russia go hand in hand with playing down the influence of nationalism in Russia. Marlene Laruelle (2020, p.115) believes Poland and the three Baltic states are ‘far more ethno-nationalist than Putin’s regime.’ Laruelle (2020, p.106) also believes Turkey is more authoritarian than Russia, a claim which is at odds with Freedom House[3] ratings. Such claims can only be made by playing down the influence of nationalism in Putin’s regime. Indeed, US political scientists played down the influence of nationalism both in the USA (Economist

2016; Lieven 2004, 2016) and in Russia (Clover 2016; Cohen 2019; Kuzio 2020, pp.82-105) -and on both counts with Trump's 2016 election and Putin's 2014 crisis they have been wrong.

Michael McFaul (2021) believes it is wrong to describe Putin as a transactional leader who instrumentally uses nationalism because he 'is an ideological leader, and many of his decisions both at home and abroad are guided by his desire to advance his anti-Western worldview.' Putin has 'gravitated toward illiberal, nationalist, and orthodox values.' McFaul (2021) asks: 'Why, after all, would Putin invest hundreds of millions of dollars in expanding RT's global reach if he were only a transactional realist?' McFaul (2021) makes an important point when he asks why Putin and his cabal do not just keep all their stolen money to enjoy on luxuries rather than investing some of it into Soviet style *aktivnije meropriyatiia* (active measures)?

The myth of Russian nationalism

My discussion of the evolution of nationalism is important in understanding the divergent paths taken by Russian nationalism from Ukrainian and European nationalisms (Brudny and Finkel 2011). Unlike England and France, Russia never created a nation-state before building a vast geographically contagious land empire (Hosking 1998). Richard Pipes (1996-1997, p.56) wrote, 'the rise of the national state and the empire occurred concurrently, and not, as in the case of the Western powers, in sequence.' Russian intellectuals and politicians have historically failed to articulate demands for separatism from empires (Suny 2001, p.44). Russian and English nationalists are similar in that neither advocated for separatism from their unions. At the same time, they are different because only the latter created a nation-state before forging a union and empire and therefore the English 'imagined community' has clearly defined borders which the Russian has never possessed.

Using the term 'nationalist' is therefore a misnomer because Russians have never sought to build a state independent of Tsarist Russia or the USSR (Motyl 1990; Rowley 2000). David G. Rowley (2000, p.23) writes it is 'inaccurate and misleading' to use the terms 'nationalism' and 'nationalist'

vis-a-vis Russia and it is more appropriate to use imperialism and imperialist. ‘That Russians expressed their national consciousness through the discourse of imperialism rather than the discourse of nationalism has far-reaching implications for both Russian history and nationalism theory’ (Rowley 2000, p.23). George Lichtheim (1971) wrote that Russian imperialism was well integrated within national Russian tradition and supported by many social groups and parties.

Each of the 14 non-Russian Soviet republics included a titular nation which viewed the republic as its homeland. In the 14 non-Russian republics, nationality policies forged loyalties to the Soviet state and to their republics, a factor reflected in the high public support given to territorial integrity in post-Soviet Ukraine (Shulman 2002). In the USSR, Soviet and Russian identities and nationalisms were integrated and the Russian SFSR was the only Soviet republic which had no republican institutions (Kuzio 2007, pp.177-216). Russian nationalists viewed ‘Russia’ and the USSR as one and the same and never limited ‘Russia’ to only the Russian SFSR or since 1991, the Russian Federation (Kumar 2000, pp.584-588).

Zbigniew Wojnowski (2017) points out that the USSR was a ‘nationalist state’ because its memory politics promoted eastern Slavic nationalism and national unity against domestic and foreign ‘Others.’ Anti-Zionist propaganda distrusted Jews as lacking national roots, not being politically reliable and allied to Ukrainian nationalists (Erlacher 2013, pp.308-309, 312). This Soviet nationalism continues to dominate Russian political leaders, their views of history and how Ukraine should pursue the eastern Slavic identity policies implemented in Lukashenka’s Belarus. In Summer 1991, the Russian SFSR did not declare independence from the USSR - unlike Ukraine (24 August) and Belarus (25 August). When the Tsarist and Soviet empires disintegrated in both 1917 and 1991, respectively, Russian civic nationalism was weak (Tolz 2001). Russian democrats, pro-Tsarist ‘Whites’ and Communist ‘Reds’ refused to accept or were cold towards an independent Ukraine in 1917-1921 and 1990-1991.

In June 1990, the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Russian SFSR was based on economic grounds, rather than national identity because the republic was a territory rather than perceived as the homeland for the

Russian nation (Chen 2007, p.76). The Russian SFSR was therefore the least complete state in the USSR (Salmin 1997). Russian support for the dismantling of the USSR in December 1991 was a product of Yeltsin's wish to remove Soviet leader Gorbachev 'rather than a desire to dismantle the empire and create a Russian nation state' (Brudny 1998, p.262). Soviet leader Gorbachev asked 'Why did Russia need independence? From whom did they need to be independent? From itself?'[4]

In the USSR, only a handful of Russian dissidents, such as Andrei Amal-rik and Vladimir Bukovsky were nationalists; that is, they sought to separate the Russian SFSR from the Soviet Union. What were defined as 'Russian nationalists' in 1991 were hard-line great power nationalists seeking to preserve the Soviet Union. Only 'radical liberals,' such as the Democratic Movement of the Soviet Union, agreed with non-Russian dissidents that the 'Soviet Union is a forcible union of peoples around the Great Russian national core' and non-Russians had a right to independence (Bilinsky 1977, p.81-83).

In the Russian Federation, what have been defined as 'nationalists' have included a wide array of ideologies which support imperialist, great power politics and Russian chauvinism. National Bolsheviks, Eurasianists (such as Dugin), neo-Nazis (such as the RNE), and pro-Soviet groups shared common platforms. The origins of the 'red-white-brown' coalition, which played a central role in annexing Crimea and the 'New Russia' project, lies in the 'red-brown' coalition behind the August 1991 hard-line putsch and the 1993 parliamentary coup d'etat.

Democratic Russian groups did not exist until the late 1970s and 1980s in the emigration. The Russian emigre *Narodno-trudovoj soiuz rossiiskikh soli-daristov* (National Alliance of Russian Solidarists - NTS), created by young members of the White emigres in 1932 in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (Stephan 1978, pp.16-30), sought to preserve post-Soviet Russia as an empire. Because NTS dominated KONR (the Committee for the Liberation of Peoples of Russia) and its CIA-supported successor, the American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia, it failed to attract representatives from non-Russian emigre groups. Ukrainians flatly refused to cooperate with both organisations.

The goal of Ukrainian nationalism was to create an independent state and this aim was promoted through social-democratic (e.g., 1917-1921), liberal (Soviet Ukrainian dissidents) and different variants of nationalist ideologies found in the three wings of the *Orhanizatsiya Ukrainskykh Natsionalistiv* (Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists - OUN). Ukrainian nationalist goals of an independent state were diametrically different to Russian nationalist goals of maintaining empires and unions.

Insecure nationalism and the growth of inclusivity and pluralism in nation-states

Liberal universalism within nation-states became more predominate over ethnic particularism in the second half of the 20th century. The growth of civic-political rights, let alone those pertaining to minority ethnic groups, was slow and uneven. A breakthrough in achieving greater pluralism and inclusivity in Western nation-states only occurred in the 1960s and after 1991 in some post-communist states.

Nationality policies within nation-states were never uniform, even in the 'civic West.' Italy and Austria began to create the foundations of a modern nation-state after World War II. In both Italy and France, the past still leaves a shadow over current politics through the popularity of fascist and populist nationalist parties, such as the National Rally (the renamed National Front), League (the renamed Northern League) and the National Alliance (the renamed Italian Social Movement). Spain and Portugal's fascist regimes lasted into the mid-1970s and only after a peaceful evolution in the former and a revolution in the latter did democratic nation-states emerge. Nationalist, fascist and neo-Nazi political forces have a great deal more influence over Russian society (see Verkhovskii 2014) than the far right has in Ukraine.

Civic and ethnic nationalism can be *both* intolerant and tolerant. France has long exhibited an intolerant attitude towards national minorities and immigrants who are encouraged to divest themselves of their linguistic and cultural background in favour of a French identity. Greece and Bulgaria have pursued intolerant policies which deny the existence of a Macedonian people. Serbian nationalists do not recognise the Macedonian and

Montenegrin nations, viewing them as ‘artificial’ constructs created by Communist Yugoslavia. Russian nationalists use the same argument about an ‘artificial’ Ukraine created by the Soviet Union. The ethno-cultural nationalism of minorities within empires, apartheid regimes or even in civic nation-states can be defensive and benign. Ukrainian nationalism in the USSR was defensive; for example, when it defended the republic’s sovereignty and the Ukrainian language from Russification.

Ethnic nationalism is intolerant and often undertaken by insecure ethnic groups (Brown 1999, pp.298; Snyder 2000, p.75). Insecure ‘masculinist nationalism’ grows where there is a heightened conflict with a domestic or external ‘Other’ (Edmunds and Turner 2001, p.105). Russian nationalists believe that Russia and Eurasian civilisation are under attack from the West. Putin is the macho Russian leader fighting domestic and external threats to Russian security (Sperling 2016). Russia’s 2014 invasion and annexation of Crimea was portrayed to Russians as the actions of a great power no longer accepting humiliation and standing up for its national interests.

Civic nationalism has evolved into a more liberal variant only after the ethnic group which espouses it has achieved its goal of hegemony. After insecure ethnic groups achieve their aims and become hegemons within their territories, they can reduce their intolerance of minorities (e.g., Francophone nationalists in Quebec towards Anglophones and immigrant ‘ethnics’). Eric Kaufmann (1999, 2000a, 2000b) traces the evolution of American nationalism in such a manner. American and French nationalism evolved into civic variants only in the second half of the 20th century, and in the case of the US only since the 1960s.

Russian nationalism has many insecurities arising from an unwillingness to divest itself of empire and the Soviet past. Russian nationalists believe Russia is destined to always be an empire. In the 1990s, Russian leaders failed to articulate a new post-imperial Russian civic identity from the ruins of the Soviet empire in the manner of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk who created a new identity for the Turkish nation-state which had emerged from the Ottoman Empire. Russian nationalism will continue to be insecure because it seeks hegemony not only over the Russian Federation but over Ukraine and Eurasia.

Ukrainian nationalist insecurities have very different origins arising from defending an independent state from external Russian irredentism. The Russian Federation has held territorial designs on Crimea throughout the post-Soviet period (see Chapter 8) and in 2014 invaded and annexed the peninsula. It took Russia the entire decade of the 1990s to recognise the Russian-Ukrainian border. An additional insecurity stems from Russia's view of Ukraine as an 'artificial' country and Russians and Ukrainians as 'one people.'

Russian political leaders and nationalists view the conflict in Ukraine as their proxy war with the West. As a puppet state, Ukraine is doing the bidding of the West towards which Russia has had a historical insecurity complex. McFaul (2021) writes that 'Putin has purpose. He is highly motivated by a set of orthodox, illiberal antidemocratic, anti-Western ideas.'

This increase in pluralism and inclusivity within Western nation-states is discussed below in the fields of citizenship and the vote, immigration and multiculturalism.

Citizenship and the vote

Citizenship is both a set of rights and a demarcation of 'us' from 'them.' Citizenship not only confers a set of rights and obligations, but citizens acquire a new identity, are socialised into 'civic virtues' and 'become members of a political community with a particular territory and history' (Turner 1997, p.9). At the same time, citizenship takes place within nation-states which have past baggage, such as colonialism and discrimination against national minorities, historical myths, culture, language, codes of behaviour, religions and institutions.

Citizenship and nationalism have been linked since the late 18th century because nation-states are bounded and incorporate political identities. Citizenship policies are regulated, formulated and implemented within institutions, the rule of law, culture and history which pre-date the more recent multicultural era. Russia's concept of compatriots blurs the distinction between citizens and non-citizens by claiming that the primary allegiance of the latter should be to the Russian World. The goal of the

Russian World is to unite Russian speakers and all those who hold an attachment to Russian culture.

Putin's political representation in the DNR and LNR, *Spravedlivaya Rossiya* (Just Russia) Party, had been calling since April 2017 for the distribution of Russian passports to the approximately 3.8 million residents in Russian-controlled Donbas (down from 6.5 million in the entire Donbas prior to the 2014 crisis).[5] In April 2019, the month Zelenskyy was elected Ukrainian president, Russia began illegally issuing passports to Ukrainian citizens in the DNR and LNR, a step backed by 70 percent of Russian citizens (Levada Centre 2019). A Russian State Duma deputy said there will be 1 millionRussian passport holders in the DNR and LNR by the end of 2021.[6] By the September 2021 State Duma elections, 630,000 passports had been distributed in the DNR and LNR.[7]

Russia's illegal action undermines the concept of citizenship, makes the reintegration of the DNR and LNR into Ukraine more difficult, constitutes a creeping form of Russian annexation and gives Putin an excuse, as in Georgia's South Ossetian frozen conflict in 2008, to invade Ukraine in 'defence' of Russian citizens. Russian support for compatriots is a national security threat to Ukraine because it claims a right to intervene on their behalf, as in 2014 (Gretskiy 2020).

Western nation-states have differed in their approaches to citizenship. Nevertheless, there has been a general tendency, as in other areas, towards greater pluralism and inclusivity over time. Citizenship, the vote and immigration have been intricately linked. Women did not become citizens until the 20th century in most democracies; an exception was New Zealand which granted women the vote in 1893.

In the 20th century, two waves of enlarging citizenship and the vote have taken place. In the first half of the 20th century women were largely brought into citizenship and the vote while during the second half of the century immigrants and indigenous peoples were added to membership of the political community. Australia granted women the vote nine years after New Zealand but excluded 'aboriginal natives' until 1962; only a few years earlier than Australia's adoption of multiculturalism. France and Italy only

granted women the vote in 1944 and 1945, respectively, a decade after Turkey.

In the post-World War II era the majority of Western nation-states have evolved towards greater pluralism and liberalised their citizenship and immigration policies. The 1981 British Nationality Act was the exception that moved Britain from an over-inclusive nation-state to an identity based on blood and culture. In contrast, after Germany was re-united in October 1990 it evolved from an ethnic definition of citizenship, which had been in place since the 19th century, to a more inclusive form. Prior to 1990 the ethno-cultural definition of 'Germanness' had been evoked because German nationalism emerged after a state was created and the state was not congruent with the nation. Broadening the inclusivity of the nation-state was only discussed in Germany from the 1980s and implemented in the 1990s. The UK and German cases show that citizenship is never static but can evolve towards more inclusive or exclusive forms. With a weak allegiance to civic nationalism, Russian views of citizenship - as seen in South Ossetia and the DNR and LNR - are not limited to the Russian Federation.

Russian nationalists believe Russia's relationship with Ukraine is akin to that between Germany and Bavaria (Judah 2013, p.84). Russian nationalists view the unification of Germany as an example they wish to follow with Ukraine which they see as 'Little Russia' and one of the three branches of the pan-Russian nation. Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny compared Russians and Ukrainians to divided Germany and believes their integration will be a 'natural process.'[8]

The USA, similar to European nation-states, has also evolved over time towards greater plurality. As Rogers M. Smith (1997, p.499) pointed out, 'The U.S. is not an inherently and autonomous liberal democratic nation, as many glorifying histories would have it.' Race, gender and class 'have always been such a defining feature of American life' (Smith, R.M. 2001, p.87), as was clearly seen with the victory of a populist nationalist in the 2016 presidential elections and Trump's subsequent takeover of the Republican Party.

The USA evolved from a very narrow definition of the political community in 1790, when the US Naturalisation Act provided for citizenship to only white, protestant, wealthy men, towards greater pluralism and inclusivity nearly two centuries later. Formal US citizenship was only introduced in 1868 when black slaves were given the vote. But Jim Crow policies introduced in the last decades of the 19th century effectively took back the vote from black Americans and their disenfranchisement in the south lasted until the first half of the 1960s. The US has engaged in discussions on immigration, citizenship and their link to national identity with great frequency since 1776 which have resulted in, 'clashing ideas about the foundation of American citizenship and nationality' (Schneider 2000, pp.256, 270). As seen since 2016, the discussion continues.

US citizenship has, 'always expressed illiberal, undemocratic ascriptive myths of American civic identity; along with various types of liberal and republican ones, in logically inconsistent but politically effective combinations...' (Smith, R.M. 1997, p.470). White supremacy could still be championed by those opposing slavery, full rights were denied to those incorporated within conquered Spanish territories, residents of the Philippines could be denied US citizenship and there could be widespread fear at allowing the immigration of Jews and Catholics. The US historical record on Native Americans, Mexicans and Blacks is very poor. At the same time, it has an exceptional record on integrating Jews and the USA has not experienced widespread anti-Semitism (see Lipset 1997).

Western nation-states remained lukewarm on fully coming to terms with their racist, colonial and slave-trading history until the 1960s and even more recently in some cases. Discussion of Soviet crimes against humanity, especially during the Stalin era, flourished during Gorbachev's USSR in the late 1980s and Yeltsin's Russia in the 1990s. A cult of Stalin has been promoted alongside a religious cult of the Great Patriotic War during Putin's presidency where Stalin's crimes against humanity are excused, ignored or downplayed (see Kuzio 2017). Russia has refused to contemplate the very idea of discussing its rule over non-Russians in the Tsarist and Soviet eras, claiming Russia's record is positive and far superior to that of western colonialism (see Putin 2021).

Yale University, which champions itself as a liberal university, continued to name buildings on its campus after proponents of slavery until the 1960s.

Indeed, eight of its 12 residential buildings were named after Slave owners, including a college named after John Calhoun, a former Vice President of Yale University, who supported slavery in the early 19th century. A museum to the British city of Bristol's role in the slave trade was only opened in 1999. Debates about how to deal with the injustice of slavery continues to be made about what should be done about street names and monuments. In 2020, a monument to slave trader Edward Colston was throw into the Bristol harbour.

The September 2001 UN Conference on Racism did not lead to a breakthrough on racism because of accusations and counteraccusations from different sides of the debate. While Middle Eastern and African states condemned the slave trade, they were unwilling themselves to acknowledge the role of Arabs and local peoples in the trade (in addition to Europeans).

These contradictions are not unusual in democracies and are even more likely to emerge in countries with an insecure nationalism, such as Russia which denies it ever committed crimes against Ukrainians and other nonRussian peoples. French and Russian nationalists have never understood why Bretons and Ukrainians, respectively, complained about Francisation and Russification.

In the USA, as in most nation-states, citizenship legislation is a 'product of ongoing contestation and compromise' (Smith, R.M. 1997, p.472). The dilemma of creating a political community which reflects the dominant ethnocultural interests of the titular nation was, sometimes, in conflict with the civic ideals promoted by the USA. This was only resolved in the 1960s when US policy transitioned towards combining *both* national integration and cultural pluralism. Multiculturalism, US elites still believe, is likely to damage American national identity because it celebrates diversity rather than unity.

Immigration became a major issue in US politics in the 2016 elections when Trump mobilised voters to view it as a threat to US identity - that is, continued White Anglo-Saxon dominance. Internal and external threats to

American, white and protestant civilisation is ‘fundamental’ to American exceptionalism which is another way of saying civic nationalism ‘without using the word nationalism’ (Lieven 2016, p.11, 15). Meanwhile, assimilationism along the lines of the pre-1960s ‘melting pot’ was no longer tenable and a compromise was reached whereby US policies would turn immigrants into Americans while allowing them to celebrate their cultural background in the private domain.

Russia has lambasted multiculturalism, LGBT rights and other supposed threats to ‘traditional’ Christian values which are allegedly taking place in Europe. Russia supports populist nationalist and neo-fascist groups in Europe who agree with this criticism and who oppose their countries’ continued membership of the EU (Shekhovtsov 2018). McFaul (2021) writes:

Putin has deliberately tried to position himself as the leader of the illiberal, conservative world—a role he defines in opposition to U.S. liberal internationalism. To liberate Europeans from NATO’s imperial control, he champions sovereignty. To defend autocracy, he berates the United States for supporting so-called colour revolutions, whether in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, or the Middle East during the Arab Spring. To counter what he labels Western liberal decadence, he trumpets his definition of Christian, traditional family values, which he asserts are central to Russian identity and to resurgent conservative movements around the world. Although less demagogic in style than other populists, Putin deploys some of their rhetoric and methods, dividing both Russian and other societies into ‘real’ folk and their elite exploiters (never mind that Putin himself is deeply intertwined with Russia’s ruling economic elite).

The USA has always remained concerned that ethnic groups who are not from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds would not become sufficiently ‘American;’ that is, their ethnic origins would determine if they could assimilate into the American nation. Greater pluralism from the 1960s meant these views on citizenship and immigration began to change but this has come under criticism more recently from resurgent populist nationalism. In comparison to the early 20th century the culture, language and history of immigrants was no longer vilified as inferior baggage only to be jettisoned at the

earliest opportunity in order to become ‘true Americans.’ Integration into American values and civic nationalism was no longer seen as contradicting the maintenance of pride in one’s cultural heritage. Nevertheless, immigrants to the USA continued to be subjected to strong Americanising pressures and taught, ‘common core American values, a common US history, and a common language’ (Foner 2001, p.36).

A major contrast between consolidated democracies in the West and democratising states in post-communist Europe rests on the manner in which the vote has been introduced. In the West the vote was only gradually introduced from the late 18th century over the course of the next two centuries. In most Western democracies, women were given the vote after World Wars I and II. Between the 1780s and 1960s the vote was gradually expanded in the West to include all social classes, women and aboriginal peoples. In two of the three countries which have introduced multiculturalist policies - Canada and Australia - aboriginal peoples only obtained the vote in 1960 and 1962, respectively. With the fall of communism in 1991 there was no debate as to whether women should or should not receive the vote. In post-communist democratising states the vote was granted immediately to all citizens after the communist regimes disintegrated and a process of democratisation had begun. Some countries such as Ukraine remained on their democratisation courses while others in Eurasia, such as Russia, stagnated and became consolidated authoritarian regimes.

The granting of citizenship in post-communist Europe proved to be less contentious than in western Europe and North America. Two exceptions were Latvia and Estonia which adopted German-style ethnic citizenship laws which initially denied the vote to Russian speakers and made citizenship difficult to obtain. The record on providing citizenship and the vote in democratising post-communist countries is consequently better than that of consolidated democracies in the West.

In consolidated authoritarian regimes such as Russia, there is no real vote because democratic liberties are circumscribed. With political repression increased to a very high level and opposition leader Navalny imprisoned on trumped-up charges after a botched attempt to poison him, the September

2021 ‘elections’ were the most farcical in Russia’s post-Soviet history and showed the gulf between Russia and Ukraine.[9] Russians are citizens but have no civil and political rights. Ukrainian citizens with Russian passports in the DNR and LNRwere therefore able to vote in the 2021 State Duma elections although their votes had little influence on its predetermined outcome. In 1991, Ukraine adopted the ‘zero option’ whereby everybody resident in its territory at the time automatically became citizens.

Immigration

Unlike in western European and traditional settler nations, most post-communist states have not had to deal with the question of immigration because asylum seekers and immigrants from developing countries look upon postcommunist states as transit routes to the more affluent West. They are also unlikely to seek employment as ‘guest workers’ because employment opportunities are limited in post-communist countries. Nevertheless, in the 20152016 refugee crisis, populist nationalist governments in Hungary and Poland fanned Islamophobia and refused EU demands to accept migrants from the greater Middle East. Lukashenka’s response to extensive Western sanctions against his 2020 election fraud has been to weaponise migrants by encouraging them to cross illegally into EU members Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

Anti-immigrant discourse and violence is commonplace and typical among Russian nationalist and neo-Nazi groups. Navalny began his Russian political career fanning xenophobic hatred of immigrants, describing Muslims from the Caucasus as ‘cockroaches.’[10] Russian nationalists believe on the one hand that Russia’s ‘natural’ state is to be an empire but at the same time hold racist opinions about Central Asians and Caucasians. Russian nationalists want to maintain control over Central Asia and the Caucasus but without having to deal with their inhabitants.

The perception that Asian immigration posed a threat was seen as sufficiently high for it to be fully banned in the USA and Canada until the 1950s. In the USA it was not until 1965 when all racial exclusions on immigration were fully removed (Foner 2001; Volpp 2001). The ‘White Australia’ policy introduced in 1901 was aimed at keeping out Asians and

was dismantled only by 1973. Nativism (i.e., hostility to immigration), ‘was a recurrent phenomenon in America, particularly during periods of economic and political crisis’ (Lipset 1997, p.160), making its re-appearance in a major way during the 2016 US elections. Restrictions on immigration have characterised each wave of migration to the USA since the mid-19th century when the country was first opened up to outsiders (Scobey 2001, p.18).

There has been a gradual growth in cultural pluralism and inclusivity within the majority of Western nation-states, although often reluctantly. Germany and Austria were the only two countries that adopted ‘differential exclusion’ until the 1990s. In Germany the evolution towards a more inclusive society was linked to the greater security felt by its ruling elites following the unification of Germany in 1990. Russian nationalism and identity, in contrast, remains insecure. Japan, often described as a model democracy since 1945, does not permit immigration and disbars half a million Koreans living in Japan, including those born in the country, from citizenship.

Immigration policies have generally become more liberalised since the 1960s; the exception was the UK which already had a liberal policy that changed in the direction of greater restrictions. This evolution towards greater liberalisation in immigration has mirrored the overall evolution towards greater plurality and inclusiveness in Western nation-states after World War II and especially since the 1960s. These trends reversed a ‘two-hundred-year tradition of increasingly “ethnic” citizenship in Europe’ (Joppke 1999, p.647). In the EU only Greece, Austria and Luxembourg continue to deny citizenship rights to second generation immigrants.

Multiculturalism

Terms such as multiculturalism have become catch-all terms denoting a wide variety of activities and policies. Multiculturalism has been defined in at least four ways:

1 Immigration for political, economic or other reasons to new countries.

2 Policies serving to protect ethnic and national minorities.

3 Movement towards a post-national utopia of increasing globalisation and the decline of nation-states.

4 ‘Political correctness’ and identity politics in higher education.

Multiculturalism seeks to ameliorate the task of reconciling nationalist particularism with universal liberalism. The main manner in which multi-culturalism has been discussed is with regard to the relationship between the titular nation and national minorities, and this informs the following discussion of multiculturalism.

The purpose of multiculturalism within a democratic society is to teach its citizens to value diversity and differences, thus helping to integrate diverse cultures into the larger society without cutting them off from their (collective) pasts. The legitimacy of the nation-state is reinforced as citizens are willing to make sacrifices for those with whom they share a common destiny. This helps to forge a common ‘We’ which is necessary in the event of an external threat to the country.

Multicultural societies are distinguished by equality of opportunity, a rejection of the French assimilationist nation-state model, and a single culture promoted in the public domain combined with tolerance for different cultures within the private sphere. Within the public domain the legal system, politics and economics are dominated by the common culture of the nationstate. At the same time, the languages of national minorities are not subjected to assimilationist pressures, and they can be provided with equal opportunities to integrate into society.

The Tsarist Empire, the USSR and the Russian Federation were intolerant towards the Ukrainian language and culture. Russification was especially harsh when Soviet Ukraine was led by ‘Little Russian’ leaders, such as Soviet Communist Party of Ukraine First Secretary Volodymyr Shcherbytskyy (1972-1989) (see Bilinsky 1983). These leaders were similar in outlook to Lukashenka in accepting a hierarchy with Russians held up as ‘elder brothers’ and the Russian language viewed as modern and superior.

Will Kymlicka (1996), who has been the most prolific scholarly advocate of multiculturalism, believes cultures and national identities are ideally suited

to be the primary foci of identification. This is because being part of a clearly defined and respected cultural group is a requirement for personal identity. According to Kymlicka (1996), it is impossible to separate the state from its ethnic components. Culture, Kymlicka (1996) believes, cannot be divorced from liberal polities because it provides additional meaning by facilitating participation in a recognised community. Freedom and equality make most sense to the majority of citizens within their own 'societal cultures,' as defined by language, history, shared memories and values, common institutions, religion, economic and recreational life. Kymlicka (1996, p.105) writes that, 'cultural membership provides us with an intelligent context of choice, and a secure sense of identity and belonging, that we call upon in confronting questions about personal values and projects.'

Advocates of group rights assert that a strong sense of identity can only arise within cultures; in other words, all identities are created through interactions within a cultural context. This leads to the belief that group rights afford greater political tolerance than policies based upon universal liberalism (Kymlicka and Opalski 2001). Kymlicka (1996) believes that nationalist particularism can be reconciled with universal liberalism and group with individual rights. A nation-state based on individual rights can also provide multicultural rights to minority groups. Kymlicka (1996) therefore rejects the traditional view of liberals who believed democracies could only function if all of its citizens were united by a common civic culture which assimilated everybody into the core (titular) nation. Liberals also traditionally opposed group rights because this stressed difference and the maintenance of ethnicity which would be detrimental to maintaining the unity of the civic nation. Kymlicka (1996) believes difference is not a threat to the nation-state but a way of maintaining its integrity in the face of multi-ethnicity.

Kymlicka's (1996, 1997) major criticism of multi-ethnic states was that they could never be 'neutral' with respect to national groups. The core nation would always remain privileged through the choice of which language to use within schools, the courts and government services; which public holidays and historical myths to prioritise; and how to draw, or re-draw, internal boundaries. The USSR was a 'nationalist state' which

promoted eastern Slavic nationalism within its overall building of a Russian-speaking Soviet man and woman (Wojnowski 2017). Post-Soviet Ukraine could have emulated Belarus in continuing to practice Soviet nationality policies grounded in an eastern Slavic identity or transition towards pursuing an ethnic Ukrainian identity (Shulman 2005). These two policy options were both grounded in ethno-cultural factors but with its greater support for democratisation, ethnic Ukrainian identity is the more civic of the two. Russian political leaders and scholars who support Ukraine pursuing an eastern Slavic identity are great power nationalists who do not have any qualms about the inevitability of this leading to democratic regression. This is clearly seen when Loshkariov and Sushentsov (2018, pp.75-77) approvingly cite a DNR leader who said, 'We all know we are Russians' and 'I don't see any difference between a Russian and a Ukrainian.' Similarly, Cohen (2019, p.17) denied the existence of a Ukrainian people, writing 'when the current crisis began in late 2013, Ukraine was one state, but it was not a single people or united nation.' Cohen (2019, p.22) added, 'There is not one Ukraine or one "Ukrainian people" but at least two, generally situated in its Western and Eastern regions.'

Of Ukraine's six presidents only Yanukovych promoted an eastern Slavic identity which made him popular among Russian political leaders who believed he would follow in Lukashenka's footsteps. But Yanukovych failed in his attempt to impose an eastern Slavic identity on Ukraine (Kuzio 2014, 2015). Opposition to affirmative action for the Ukrainian language has come from a small minority who opposed changes to the Soviet-era dominant status of the Russian language (Fournier 2002).

Conclusion

A static model of nationalism and nation-states places the Western experience on a higher moral plane to the East and transports back to the 18th century a 20th century picture of an all-inclusive nation-state. In contrast, a dynamic model of nationalism and nation-states factors in changes over time and shows nation-states only became inclusive, civic and pluralistic in the 20th century.

Tension between nationalist particularism and universal liberalism has always existed in nation-states and will continue to exist. Political parties in European democracies have dealt with the challenges of immigration, racism and multiculturalism in different ways. The centre-right has been co-opted (as in the UK, the USA, and Hungary) or eclipsed (as in Poland) by populist nationalists who have become the guardians of the traditional nation-state and opposed to a pluralist understanding of the nation-state. Centre-right national democrats have never existed except on the periphery of political life in Russia, leaving a vacuum that has been dominated by great power nationalists. In Ukraine, as in other former Soviet non-Russian republics, national democratic political parties emerged from the dissident movement and emigre groups. National democrats won the 2004 (Yushchenko) and 2014 (Poroshenko) Ukrainian presidential elections.

Immigration has changed European nation-states and forced many of them to abandon assimilationism, confront charges of racism and adapt to the new multi-ethnic environment. Although most Western nation-states have become more pluralist in the 20th century, multiculturalism as a state policy was only introduced in three of them - Australia, Canada and Sweden. Most nation-states have preferred to replace assimilationist policies with looser forms of national integration which are seen as less of a threat to national unity than multiculturalism.

Since 1991, Russian political leaders and intellectuals have failed to develop a vision for a post-imperial Russian nation-state. Instead, they have aligned with Russian great power nationalists in supporting a Russian ‘imagined community’ (Andersen 2006) which is larger than the Russian

Federation. Importantly, during Putin's presidency Russian views of Ukraine and Ukrainians have regressed to Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre denials of the existence of Ukraine and the chauvinistic view of Ukrainians as one of three branches of the pan-Russian nation.

Since 1991, Ukraine has pursued a 'quadruple transition' of civic nation and state building, democratisation and marketisation (Kuzio 2001b). Russia believes its eastern Slavic culture and Eurasian civilisation is far superior to 'decadent' European values and believes it is at war and in competition with the West and indirectly through the West's puppet state of Ukraine. Ukraine has sought to integrate into Europe and escape from the former Soviet space and the Russian World has never been popular (Kuleba 2021). This divergence in identities is at the heart of the Russian-Ukrainian war and is discussed and analysed in the next chapter.

Notes

1 https://www.npr.org/2018/10/24/660042653/what-is-a-nationalist-in-the-age-of-tru mp?t=1613826133094.

2 https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/2021%20Annual%20Report.pdf.

3 Turkey scores 32 and Russia 20 on the Freedom House rating. https://freedom house.org/countries/freedom-world/scores.

4 *Reuters*, 16 December 1996.

5 https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/duma-vibory-donbas-prilepin-boroday-edinaya-r ossia/31249620.html.

6 https://tass.com/society/1282593.

7 https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-danilov-rosiiska-pasportyzatsiia/31455474. html.

8 https://echo.msk.ru/programs/focus/1417522-echo.

9 https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/rigged-vote-highlights-growing-gulf-between-putins-russia-and-democratic-ukraine.

10 https://archive.org/details/VideoAlexeiNavalnyComparesMuslimsToCockroaches.

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2 Russia and Ukraine in comparative perspective

The main problem, in my view, is Russia's heavy imperial heritage. Everybody thinks for some reason that Russia remains an empire and still treats it as an empire.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, 1999[1]

Scholarly writing about the 2014 crisis in Russian-Ukrainian relations has often wrongly assumed that this is a new phenomenon; in reality, there has been tension between both countries throughout the period since 1991 (see D'Anieri 2019). Ukrainian-Russian tension existed under *both* Russian Presidents Yeltsin and Putin and under *both* 'pro-Russian' Ukrainian Presidents Leonid Kuchma and Yanukovych.

The 2014 crisis cannot therefore be understood without 'looking at its long-term sources' because to do so would be to take them 'out of context and therefore to misinterpret them' (D'Anieri 2019, p.253). Crimea was always a source of tension in Russian-Ukrainian relations and Russian leaders made territorial claims towards Crimea and the port of Sevastopol beginning in January 1992 and on many occasions throughout the 1990s. 8486 percent of Russians have supported Crimea's annexation since its annexation in 2014 (Levada Centre 2019). Russian views of and policies towards Ukraine 'are widely shared across the Russian elite and populace' (D'Anieri 2019, p.25; Gretskiy 2020, p.21; Minchenia, Tornquist-Plewa and Yurchuk 2018; Torbakov 2020). The departure of Putin from the Russian political scene, for whatever reason, would not fundamentally change Russian attitudes and policies towards Ukraine or end Russian control of Crimea, which is very popular among Russians. Although Russians do not hold the same sentimental attachment to the Donbas as they do to Crimea (see Levinson 2021) the planned issuing of passports to all residents of the DNR and LNR makes it impossible for any Russian leader to end Moscow's support for these two proxy enclaves.

The origins of the 2014 crisis lie in Russia's inability to recognise an independent Ukrainian state and separate Ukrainian nation. The crisis is

consequently ‘deeper than is commonly understood’ because of a ‘profound normative disagreement and conflicts of interest’ (D’Anieri 2019, p.2). There has been an in-built tension since 1991 because ‘the more Ukraine asserted its sovereignty, the more Russia questioned it, and vice versa’ (D’Anieri 2019, p.63). Russian policy towards Ukraine has always stated that it could only exist within its borders if it pursued the eastern Slavic identity policies found in Lukashenka’s Belarus and as long as it remained within Russia’s sphere of influence. Russians have always ‘felt Ukraine was an intrinsic part of Russia’ which is deeply rooted in Russian national identity (D’Anieri 2019, p.2).

This chapter analyses how Russia, Belarus and Ukraine became independent states with very different identities. From 1994, Lukashenka’s Belarus has continued *de facto* to act as a Soviet republic, recognising Russians as the ‘elder brother’ and ‘leading nation,’ Russian Orthodox as the canonical Church and Russian as the language of modernity, while continuing to use Soviet historiography and cult of the Great Patriotic War as foundational myths. Since 1991, Ukraine has challenged all of these areas.

The Russian SFSR did not possess republican institutions in the USSR and Russian and Soviet identities were highly integrated. Russian identity was an extension of Soviet identity (Barner-Barry and Hody 1995, pp.82112). This made the USSR very different to federal Communist Yugoslavia which had permitted Serbian republican institutions and a Serbian identity separate to Yugoslav. Communist Czechoslovakia, another federal state, had federal and separate Czech and Slovak republican institutions. Gorbachev routinely confused the USSR and ‘Russia’ (Solchanyk 2001, pp.32-34). Russia captured Soviet institutions in Autumn-Winter 1991 and state building from 1991 was top down. In Belarus, a Soviet republican identity was more popular than that of ethnic Belarusian national identity. Ukraine did not inherit all of the institutions required for an independent state and state building was largely bottom up (Kuzio 1998), while ethnic Ukrainian identity was more popular with Soviet identity confined to Crimea and the Donbas.

The three eastern Slavs therefore adopted very different approaches to independence. The Russian SFSR never declared independence and ‘Russia Day’ is held on the anniversary of the 12 June 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty. Ukraine and Belarus declared independence on 24 and 25 August 1991, respectively. But of the three eastern Slavs only Ukraine held a referendum on its Declaration of Independence on 1 December 1991 which received 92.3 percent support and majorities in every region, including Crimea and Donetsk and Luhansk *oblasts.* On 25 August 1991, the Belarusian parliament transformed its 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty into an act of independence by giving it constitutional status. There was never a vote in parliament or referendum on Belarusian independence. Russia and Ukraine held presidential elections in June and December 1991, respectively, while Belarus waited until summer 1994 which Lukashenka won in the country’s only free vote.

During the meeting of the three eastern Slavic leaders on 7-8 December 1991, it was only Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk who lobbied to dissolve the USSR. Chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich was largely a bystander. Yeltsin sought to persuade Kravchuk to accept the transformation of the USSR into a confederal Union of Sovereign States, which Kravchuk rejected. After being elected president in 1994, Lukashenka removed the 1991 constitutional change and based the legitimacy of an independent Belarus on the 17 March 1991 referendum called by Gorbachev which had asked: ‘Do you consider necessary the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics in which the rights and freedom of an individual of any nationality will be fully guaranteed?’ Soviet Ukraine held three referendums in March 1991 (see below) which were superseded by the referendum on independence held on 1 December 1991.

1 Gorbachev’s referendum question was supported by 71.48 percent with 28.52 percent opposed.

2 Ukrainian parliamentary referendum on the transformation of the USSR into a loose confederation of Union of Sovereign Republics (States) was supported by 81.7 percent with 18.3 percent opposed.

3 Referendum on Ukrainian independence held in three Galician *oblasts* (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil) was supported by 88.3 percent with 11.7 percent opposed.

The roots of these long-term Russian-Ukrainian tensions are discussed in five areas in this chapter. First, contrasting Soviet legacies. Second, the legacies of national bolshevism in Russia and national communism in Ukraine. Third, the prevalence of great power nationalism in Russia and civic nationalism in Ukraine. Fourth, the image of an 'artificial' Ukraine in the eyes of Russian nationalists. Fifth, divergent Russian and Ukrainian approaches to history.

Contrasting Soviet legacies

Soviet legacies and the disintegration of the USSR impacted Russia, Ukraine and Belarus differently producing contrasting ramifications for their subsequent development as independent states. Brudny (1998, p.262) writes that the disintegration of the USSR was brought about by Yeltsin seeking to remove Gorbachev 'rather than a desire to dismantle the empire and create a Russian nation state.' Of the three eastern Slavs, only Ukraine set a goal in 1991 to build a nation-state. Russian civic nationalism was weak in the 1990s because Russians were the 'awkward nationality' (Martin 2001, p.395) and the Russian SFSR had been the 'least complete' Soviet republic with no institutions of its own until it began to build them from June 1990 when Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian SFSR, only a year before the USSR disintegrated (Salmin 1997). In the Soviet Union, 'The RSFSR did not evolve into the institutional representative of Russian national interests' (Martin 2001, p.414).

Russia's nation-building strategies have never been comfortable in being confined to the borders of the Russian Federation because they 'simply did not recognise the new state boundaries as authoritative' (Malcolm, Pravda, Allison and Light 1996, p.6). Russian policymakers and nationalists did not understand why the Russian Federation 'should be confined within the borders it inherited from the old Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic' (Malcolm, Pravda, Allison and Light 1996, p.11). Russia's

inability to focus on building a civic nation-state within the borders of the Russian Federation undermined its democratisation.

Russian great power nationalism had always been influential in the higher echelons of the Soviet armed forces and *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezo-pasnosti* (Committee on State Security - KGB). Top-down state building in post-Soviet Russia and the transformation of Soviet into Russian *siloviki* placed Russia on a trajectory to elect a former KGB officer as president and build a militocracy (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003). Sergei Skripal, who worked for the Soviet and Russian *Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravlenye* (Main Intelligence Directorate - GRU [i.e., Soviet and Russian military intelligence]) spied for the UK and was exchanged in a spy swap. In 2018, he was nearly murdered in an assassination plot by the chemical weapon *Novi-chok* introduced by GRU agents sent to eliminate a 'traitor.' Nevertheless, Skripal remains an 'unashamed Russian nationalist, enthusiastically adopting the Kremlin line in many matters...' (Urban 2018, p.208). As Skripal's views show, Russian nationalism and chauvinism was rife in the Soviet and subsequently Russian *siloviki.* Skripal belittled Ukraine and its armed forces saying: 'The problem with Ukraine is that they are incapable of leadership. They need Russians for that. The Ukrainians are simply sheep who need a good shepherd' (Urban 2018, p.240).

In Belarus, the absence of a national communist tradition, a weak ethnic identity, miniscule dissident movement in the USSR and a limited opposition movement in the late 1980s led to the freezing of the Soviet system following the election of Lukashenka. In Ukraine, a powerful legacy of national communism, stronger ethno-cultural and historic identity, proportionately the largest dissident movement in the USSR, and mass opposition movement in the Gorbachev era created a duality of power between 'sovereign communists' and national-democrats through to the 2004 Orange Revolution when the latter came to power (Kuzio 2000).

The divergent national identities of the eastern Slavs influenced their postSoviet identity policies and memory politics. Ukraine's identity was viewed in post-colonial terms, and its civic nationalism was that commonly associated with national liberation movements. The Soviet regime and

Moscow were the ‘Other’ (Kuzio 2001b). Ukrainian presidents, school textbooks, historiography and media largely portrayed Tsarist Russian and Soviet rule in negative terms, especially following the Euromaidan Revolution (see Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021).

Because Russian and Soviet identity was integrated it made it impossible to define the Soviet past as the ‘Other.’ For most Russians the USSR was a country of admiration as a superpower and, in the words of Putin (2015a), the ‘collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the century.’ Regional diversity has translated into ‘pluralism by default’ in Ukraine (Way 2016), making it impossible for Ukrainian presidents to create a ruling monopolistic party of power, such as Putin’s United Russia Party. Yanukovych’s *Partiya rehioniv* (Party of Regions) was a successful political machine, winning plurality in the 2006, 2007 and 2012 elections (Kudelia and Kuzio 2015). But attempts to impose the Donbas political machine on the entire country was always going to be impossible and provoked the Orange and Euromaidan Revolutions (Ambrosio 2017).

Among the 27 post-communist states, parliamentary systems are associated with democratisation and presidential systems with authoritarianism. Eight of the post-communist states in Eurasia with presidential systems are ‘consolidated’ and one ‘semi-consolidated’ authoritarian regimes.[1] [2] Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine - three former Soviet republics who signed Association Agreements with the EU under its Eastern Partnership - are parliamentary systems with ‘transitional or hybrid regimes.’[3] Ukraine’s return to a parliamentary system was accompanied by presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2019 which elected majorities in support of European integration. Ukraine’s pro-Russian camp lost influence following the disintegration of the Party of Regions and failure of its successors, the *Opozytsiynyy blok* (Opposition Bloc) and *Opozytsiyna platforma — Za zhyttya* (Opposition Platform - For Life), to win large numbers of parliamentary seats. The *Komunistychna Partiya Ukrayiny* (Communist Party of Ukraine - KPU), a former Party of Regions satellite party, failed to cross the threshold to enter into parliament in 2014 and was unable to participate in elections from 2015 because it continued to use Soviet symbols which are banned by Ukraine’s decommunisation laws (see Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021).

In the 1990s, Russians discussed five variations of identity which are analysed below (Tolz 1998a, pp.995-996). Following the 1996 elections, Yeltsin initiated the launch of a debate to search for a new Russian 'national idea' (Breslauer and Dale 1997).[4] The four most popular Russian identities (numbered 1 -4) deny the existence of a separate Ukrainian identity and believe Ukraine's 'natural' place is within a larger 'imagined community' led by Russia. The first four identities have dominated Russia since 1991.

past are viewed as the main markers of national identity' (Tolz 1998a, p.995). The Soviet concept of 'three brotherly Slavic people' had 'acknowledged a greater degree of separateness between Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians' (Tolz 2002, p.239). Under Putin, Russian attitudes regressed from the Soviet concept of close, but separate Russian and Ukrainian peoples to those held in the Tsarist Empire and by White Russian emigres of Russians and Ukrainians as 'one people' (see Chapter 5).

3 *Russian-Speaking Compatriots*: 'The Russians as a community of Russian speakers, regardless of their ethnic origin. Language is the main marker of national identity' (Tolz 1998a, pp.995-996). 'Those viewing the Russians as a community of eastern Slavs or Russian speakers also place a particular emphasis on Orthodoxy as a marker of Russian national identity' (Tolz 1998a, p.996). The Russian language and Russian Orthodoxy are central markers of identity for the Russian World. From 1993-1994, the Russian nation defined as a community of Russian speakers became popular among most Russian politicians. Marie Men-dras (1997, p.103) wrote that Russia would not become a civic state: 'It will have to be both the Russian state and the core of the Russianspeaking world around it.' The move to an identity based on Russian speakers contradicted steps towards building a civic identity which views the Russian Federation as its 'imagined community' (Breslauer and Dale 1997). The majority of Russians defined the Russian nation as a community of Russian speakers, a definition which included south-eastern Ukraine and Crimea (Tolz 1998b, p.292). A Russian identity based on the Russian language has led to three decades of complaints and unfounded accusations about 'discrimination of Russian' by Ukrainian governments and planted the seeds for future conflict with Ukraine over Crimea and 'New Russia.'

4 *Racial:* ‘The Russians defined racially, i.e., blood ties constitute the basis of common identity’ (Tolz 1998a, p.996). A racially defined ‘Russian’ identity would, like the previous three, include Ukrainians.

5 *Civic:* ‘A civic Russian (*Rossiiskaia*) nation whose members are all citizens of the Russian Federation’ (Tolz 1998a, p.996) would define Russians and Ukrainians as peoples living in independent states using a Western, non-ethnic and civic definition of citizenship. This identity was unpopular during the majority of Yeltsin’s presidency (Tolz 2001). The 1996 Russian-Belarusian union challenged ‘the civic model of Russian normality’ (Plokhy 2017, p.319).

Earlier, Ladis K.D. Kristof (1968) had discussed four ‘images of Russia’:

1 Kyiv Russia.

2 Muscovite Russia.

3 St. Petersburg Russia.

4 Eurasia.

Russian identity under Putin has integrated 1, 3 and 4 of these while ignoring the Novgorod and Lagoda, Vladimir-Suzdal and Muscovite origins of Russia (Kristof 1968). Putin has expropriated the ‘mother of Russian cities’ (Kyiv) in a similar manner to Tsarist Russian and Soviet historiographies which had reinforced a Russian identity grounded in a pan-Russian nation born in Kyiv Rus. Therefore, a majority of Russians always believed they and Ukrainians were the same people (Tolz 1998a). St. Petersburg Russia and Eurasianism provide Putin’s Russia with great power and superpower status respectively.

Shenfield (1996) divided Russian identity in the 1990s into four groups:

1 *Neo-Soviet:* Positive towards the Soviet legacy and negative towards Tsarism. The *Kommunisticheskaia Partiia Rossiiskoy Federatsii* (Communist Party of the Russian Federation - KPRF) and other extreme

left political forces upheld this identity and supported the Russian-Belarusian union, the revival of the USSR and full CIS integration.

2 *Archaic:* Negative towards the USSR and positive towards Tsarism. Bolshevism was alien, there is a need to 'gather Russian lands' and revive a Russian union of three eastern Slavs. Solzhenitsyn (1991) and other postSoviet Russian nationalists, such as Navalny, prefer a Russian Union or the integration of eastern Slavs and withdrawing from the Caucasus and Central Asia. Russian ethnonationalists include Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians in an ethnic 'Russian' state (Kolsto 2016, p.23).

3 *Composite (Statist):* Positive towards both Tsarism and the USSR. A balanced synthesis of Tsarist and Soviet legacies is the closest identity to what has emerged in Russia since 2000. Putin's Russia uses the Russian double headed eagle, the Soviet anthem (with new lyrics) and Soviet military insignia and promotes a religious cult of the Great Patriotic War. Mikhail Zygar (2016, p.292) writes: 'Under Putin, Communism and Orthodox traditions had merged into a new ritual.'

4 *Liberal:* Negative towards Tsarism and the USSR. As with Tolz's (1998a) categorisation, this was the weakest of the four identities. Although this identity harked back to the February Revolution of 1917, anti-Tsarist Russian democrats, such as the *Konstitutsionno-Demokraticheskaia Partiia* (Constitutional Democrats - *Kadets)*, were also imperialists and chauvinists who opposed Ukrainian independence and denied the existence of a separate Ukrainian people (Procyk 1995).

Shenfield (1996) describes archaic identity (no. 2) as the most hostile to Ukrainian independence; in fact, neo-Soviet, archaic and composite were *all* hostile to an independent Ukraine seeking to exist outside Russia's sphere of influence. All three identities could not accept Ukraine's separate existence from Russia and believed that Ukraine's nation building should be based on an eastern Slavic national identity akin to that found in Lukashenka's Belarus (Shulman 2005). Tolz (1998a, pp.995-996), Kristof (1968) and Shenfield (1996) describe how competing Russian identities were in fact able to over-ride their differences and create 'red-brown' coalitions in the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d'etat and a 'red-white-brown' coalition in the 2014 so-called 'Russian Spring' and 'New Russia' project.

The question of ‘Where is Russia?’ would be therefore perennially discussed if Russians were unable to reach a conclusion as to how to define their homeland (Richter 1995, p.70) and where the borders of the ‘imagined community’ are to be found. Both pro-Soviet (Putin) *and* anti-Soviet (Solzhenitsyn, Navalny) Russian nationalists included Ukraine and Belarus within their ‘Russian imagined community’ (see Chapter 6). Divergent Russian and Ukrainian national identities and Russian nationalist views of Ukraine and Ukrainians are at the root of the Russian-Ukraine war (Wawrzonek 2014; Szostek 2014; Stewart and Dollbaum 2017; Kuzio 2017b, 2020b).

A Russian civic nationalism had never taken root in the Tsarist Empire (Greenfeld 1993, p.230; Tishkov 1996) while the Soviet federal system had prevented the emergence of a Russian identity separate to that of the USSR (Tishkov 1996). Geoffrey Hosking (1998, p.457) writes that ‘a civic definition of nationhood’ ‘runs counter to Russian traditions’ and is ‘historically very weakly grounded.’ Empire ‘is the historic and geopolitical determinant form of development of the Russian state’ (Scanlan 1995, p.40). All ‘Red-white-brown’ Russian nationalists believe Russia is naturally an empire.

During Yeltsin’s presidency there was a failure to articulate a clear idea of a Russian nation distinct from one which was Orthodox, imperial, state or narrowly ethnic. Russians were never reconciled to limiting ‘Russia’ to that of the Russian Federation (Suny 2001, p.44). Russians preferred supranational identities which they associated with empire, orthodoxy, and the Slavic world (Suny 2001, p.57). Pal Kolsto (2000, p.204) described how in the 1990s debates about Russian identity defined ‘Russia in such a way that the state borders fail to coincide with the borders of the Russian Federation.’

The odds of Russian identity becoming civic were always slim, Mette Skak (1996, p.142) believes, because of the ‘absence of any non-imperial Russian tradition and identity to build upon. Here Russia is bereft of relevant stability more than any other post-communist state.’ Cheng Chen (2007, p.92) predicted nearly a decade before the 2014 crisis that Russian

nationalism would become expansionist because ‘successful liberal nationalism in Russia remains a remote scenario.’

Russia and Ukraine: national Bolshevism and national communism

Russia has a tradition of national Bolshevism and Ukraine a tradition of national communism. Dugin has embraced Eurasianism and national Bolshevism which fused Stalinism with Russian great power nationalism. The former created by White Russian emigres and the latter in Stalin’s USSR were inherently similar and together formed the future ideological base of ‘red-white-brown’ nationalism, support for the ‘gathering of Russian lands’ and belief Ukraine is an ‘artificial’ construct (Lewis 2020, p.551). The integration of extreme left and extreme right nationalisms into Putin’s regime made Ukraine a ‘legitimate target of violence - by invoking missionary imperialism, gendered geographic imaginaries or memories of fascism...’ (Edenborg 2017, p.310).

In the 1990s, Yeltsin at first attempted to hold the ‘red-brown’ coalition at bay but from 1994-1996, moved closer to them. Under Putin the ‘red-brown’ coalition was legitimised, brought into the mainstream and, with the integration of Tsarist and White Russian emigre nationalism into Putin’s regime (see Chapter 5), it expanded into a ‘red-white-brown’ variant. Charles Clover (2016, p.287) writes that under Putin the ‘emergence of a virulent nationalist opposition movement took the mainstream hostage.’

The absence of Russian SFSR republican institutions and the fusion of Soviet and Russian identities prevented an institutional framework through which national communists could defend Russian sovereignty vis-a-vis the Soviet centre. National communism - similar to its opposite, national democracy -therefore has no tradition in Russia. In the Belarusian SSR there was also a weak tradition of national communism. National communism in Ukraine was a powerful political force from the Russian civil war through to the disintegration of the USSR. The strength of Ukrainian identity and left-wing Ukrainian political parties during the Russian civil war forced Lenin to accommodate Ukrainian demands for a separate republic and permit a programme of Ukrainianisation

(indigenisation) during the 1920s. Stalin, who was opposed to separate republics for the non-Russians, a position Putin agrees with, curtailed Ukrainianisation in the early 1930s because of the fear that national communism was encouraging Ukrainian nationalism.

Leading Ukrainian integral nationalist theorist Dmytro Dontsov viewed national communist Mykola Khvylovy, who had access to his writings, as a 'kindred spirit' (Erlacher 2021, pp.290-291). Khvylovy's call of 'Away from Moscow!' was echoed by Dontsov's belief 'to survive Ukraine had to spurn Muscovy and embrace Europe' (Erlacher 2021, p.96). National communist Khvylovy and integral nationalist Dontsov both believed the removal of Russian influences would create a de-Russified, re-Europeanised, and independent Ukrainian culture. Both Khvylovy and Dontsov were from southeastern Ukraine. National communism emerged in Soviet Ukraine during three periods of liberalisation in the 1920s, the 1960s and the second half of the 1980s. During each period, national communists, intellectuals and dissidents condemned Soviet crimes against humanity, including the *Holodomor* (Death by Hunger) and Stalinist murders of Ukraine's cultural elites, and demanded greater republican sovereignty and an end to Russification.

Russia never sought independence in the late 1980s and sought not to dismantle the USSR but to capture it. In the second half of the 1980s, Ukrainian independence was driven by an alliance of national communists (dubbed 'sovereign communists'), cultural intelligentsia and *Narodnyy Rukh Ukrayiny* (Ukrainian Popular Movement - *Rukh)* (see Kuzio 2000). National communist Kravchuk, then chairman of the Ukrainian parliament, led Ukraine to independence in 1991 and was its first elected president. The 1917-1921 government-in-exile of the *Ukrayinska Narodna Respublika* (Ukrainian Peoples Republic - UNR) transferred its credentials to President Kravchuk on the first anniversary of Ukrainian independence in August 1992.

Russia and Ukraine: great power nationalism vs civic nationalism

Soviet Russian great power nationalism, anti-Western xenophobia and Ukrai-nophobia permeated the Soviet KGB and GRU. Russia did not just inherit buildings, equipment and personnel it also inherited mentalities, senior level *siloviki* and Chekist operating culture (Skak 2016) which came to strongly influence the domestic and external security policies of Russia's militocracy.

Anne Applebaum (2017, pp.149, 155, 159) discusses the origins of 'Chekist' Ukrainophobia in the early 1930s during the *Holodomor* and mass arrest of Ukrainian national communists, intellectuals and cultural elites. Repression in Ukraine took place amid a frenzied search for 'Petlurite [Symon Petlura was a leader of the UNR] counter-revolutionaries' allied to external enemies of the Soviet Union. Stalin and Putin have both talked of their fear of 'losing' Ukraine. Paranoia about Ukrainian nationalism 'was taught to every successive generation of secret policemen, from the OGPU to the NKVD to the KGB, as well as every successive generation of party leader. Perhaps it even helped mould the thinking of post-Soviet elite, long after the USSR ceased to exist' (Applebaum 2017, p.161). Putin was socialised into 'Chekist' culture under conservative Communist Party First Secretaries Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko's rule of the USSR from 1964 to 1985.

Soviet ideological tirades against 'bourgeois nationalism' had targeted Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonian national democratic dissidents, nationalist opponents, national communists and emigres (Kuzio 2016; Applebaum 2017, pp.149, 155, 159). Soviet ideological tirades did not target Russians in such a manner because they were never separatists and therefore not a threat to Soviet territorial integrity (Suslensky 1983). As early as 1997, *Yabloko* Party leader Yavlinsky complained about Russian TV showing footage five times a day of nationalists in western Ukraine 'under some crazy slogans.'[5] Soviet propaganda discourse of 'Ukrainian nationalists' was revived by Russian political technologists brought to Ukraine by Yanukovych to support his 2004 election campaign. The discourse and rhetoric found in contemporary Russian information warfare on 'Ukrainian nationalists' is taken from the Soviet era.

Ukrainophobia in the Soviet KGB lay behind the 1972 *pohrom (pogrom)* as it was described in Ukrainian *samvydav* (independent self-publishing - *samizdat)* of Ukrainian dissent and culture. The *pohrom* was the largest crackdown in the USSR since the Stalin era. Putin joined the KGB three years after the *pohrom* and the removal of national communist leader Petro Shelest. The degree to which this paranoia ran deep in the Soviet Union could be seen in the Gorbachev era which despite its liberalisation continued to execute Ukrainian nationalists who had fought Soviet power four decades earlier. In July 1989, Ivan Honcharuk was the last Ukrainian nationalist to be executed who had been member of the *Ukrayinska Povstanska Armiya* (Ukrainian Insurgent Army - UPA) in the 1940s and had already served a term in the Gulag. His execution took place only two years before the disintegration of the USSR and only three months before the inaugural congress of *Rukh.* In April 2021, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory rehabilitated his memory.[6]

Anti-Western xenophobia has a long history in Russian nationalism, Russian Orthodox Church, Soviet Union and Putin's Russia which is closely connected to Soviet legacies of Ukrainophobia and conspiracy mania. 'Ukrainian nationalists' have always been portrayed as Western puppets undertaking 'destructive work' and conspiracies against the Tsarist Russian Empire, the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia and the Russian World. Trevor Erlacher (2013, p.301) writes: 'The representation of the OUN as an exclusively foreign problem that corrupted former Soviet citizens with the aid of "imperialist" governments became the standard interpretation thereafter.' Soviet and post-Soviet Russian rhetoric and disinformation disparages Ukrainian nationalists as alien, under the control of Western governments and intelligence agencies, are 'foreign imposters,' *antinarodnye* (anti-popular), 'eternal enemies,' 'treacherous,' and 'reactionary' (Erlacher 2013, pp.295-297, 311, 315). For the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, the key threat emanating from Ukrainian nationalism is that it provided an alternative to the friendship of peoples myth of Russians and Ukrainians born together and always seeking to live together under Russian leadership. In this narrative, the West and 'nationalist' Ukraine are dominated by Russophobia and are enemies of Russia.[7]

The Kremlin was obsessed with conspiracies by foreign forces intent on undertaking ideological subversion against the Soviet state. Andropov, both as Soviet Ambassador to Hungary during the 1956 revolution and chairman of the KGB from 1967 to 1982 during the Prague Spring and the rise of the Polish Solidarity movement, *and* Putin based in the GDR during the East German revolution in the late 1980s, harboured phobias about mass movements and mass protests. Andropov's obsession with conspiracies was 'evident in his activities, speeches, and writings' and during his leadership of the KGB and Communist Party the volume of propaganda against Ukrainian nationalism massively increased (Erlacher 2013, pp.303-305)

Conspiracy mania in Russia inherited this Soviet legacy. Putin has tremendous respect for Andropov under whom he served in the KGB. Putin's regime believes conspiracies organised by Western intelligence agencies were behind colour revolutions in Ukraine in 2003-2004 and 2013-2014 and popular protests in Russia in 2011-2012. The Georgian Rose and Orange Revolutions were followed by the emergence of the first critical juncture in the transformation of Russian nationalism, which is discussed in the Preface.

Russian great power nationalism was dominant within the Soviet Communist Party between 1964-1985 and earlier under Stalin from the mid-1930s. In Soviet Russia, liberal dissidents and opposition nationalists lived in different worlds. In contrast, in Soviet Ukraine a form of political pluralism included national communists, liberal and national democrats, nationalists and religious dissidents. Chapter 3 compares and contrasts the dominance of great power nationalists and imperialists among Russian emigres with political pluralism found in the Ukrainian diaspora.

Nationalism has dominated post-Soviet Russian politics except for three years in the early 1990s (see Verkhovskii 2014). The nationalist right has always been weak in independent Ukraine where extreme right nationalist political parties and presidents have been electorally unpopular. Only once in 2012 was a nationalist party, *Svoboda* (Freedom), elected to parliament with ten percent of the vote. Despite Crimea's annexation and an ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, nationalist parties failed to be elected to parliament

in two elections and in 2019 Ukrainians elected a Jewish-Ukrainian and Russian speaker, Zelenskyy.

Civic nationalism (patriotism) dominated Orange (Kuzio 2010) and Euro-maidan Revolutionary protestors (Kuzio 2020, pp.82-105). Olga Onuch and Gwendolyn Sasse (2018, p.28) stressed the diversity of Euromaidan protestors among whom they estimate nationalists accounted for five percent, rising to 10 to 20 percent during violent periods. Calling into 'question the salience and stability of ethno-linguistic and regional identities' they believe 'a conceptualization of Ukrainian politics as being driven by ethno-linguistic or regional demands is too simplistic' (Onuch and Sasse 2018, pp.30-31).

Russia's military aggression came as a major shock not to western Ukrainians, who never believed Soviet myths of Russian-Ukrainian 'fraternal brotherhood,' but to Russian speakers in south-eastern Ukraine who viewed Russia's actions as a betrayal of this alleged 'brotherhood' (Razumkov Centre 2016c). The war forced Russian speakers to choose which side of the fence they were on and with most of them supporting Ukraine the war led to the growth of their patriotism. The growth of patriotism is reflected in ethnic re-configuration of primarily Russian speaking Ukrainians. The proportion of Ukrainians who identify as ethnic Russians has declined from 22 percent in the 1989 Soviet census, 17 percent in Ukraine's 2001 census to only six percent today. Among Ukrainians aged 18-29 only 2 percent give an ethnic Russian identity (Razumkov Centre 2017, p.5).

Since 2014, there has been a growth of patriotism (civic nationalism) with opinion polls showing high levels of negative attitudes towards Russian leaders, but not towards the Russian people (Razumkov Centre 2016a, 2016b, 2017). Ukrainians who had held a moderate 'conditional Ukrainian status' identity (Feklyunina 2016, p.787-788) prior to the 2014 crisis, balancing cultural affinity with Russia with a Ukrainian identity, have become more critical of Russia after moving towards the patriotic camp; that is, they had realigned with Ukrainians who had always been negatively disposed towards the Russian World. This transformation of Ukrainian identity correlates with Tatiana Zhurzhenko's (2015) analysis of Ukraine's

‘East,’ understood from a political and identity perspective rather than a geographic one, having shrunk from eight to two Donbas *oblasts* (see Kuzio, Zhuk and D’Anieri 2021). Putin’s military aggression against Ukraine has inadvertently spread negative attitudes to all things Russian which had only existed prior to 2014 in western and to some degree in central Ukraine to the South and East.

A large number of scholars have analysed the growth of civic Ukrainian identity since the 2014 crisis (Kulyk 2014, 2016; Onuch and Hale 2018; Pop-Eleches and Robertson 2018; Kaihko 2018; Bureiko and Moga 2019; Aliyev 2019, 2021; Maksimovtsova 2020; Barrington 2021). Ukraine’s growing patriotism (civic nationalism) is reflected in two important ways. Firstly, a majority of Ukraine’s Russian speakers have demonstrated their loyalty to Ukraine over the Russian World and see themselves as members of Ukraine’s emerging civic nation (Bureiko and Moga 2019, p. 138). Volodymyr Kulyk (2014, pp. 120-21) argues that ‘modern Ukrainian anti-imperial nationalism’ has a ‘deeply inclusive’ nature and is supported by Russophones and Jews in Ukraine. Secondly, 62 percent of Ukraine’s army fighting in the Donbas during the height of the war in 2014 were Russian speakers (Poroshenko 2015). A large number of Russian speakers joined the many volunteer battalions created at that time (see Aliyev 2019, 2021). South-eastern Ukraine has suffered the largest number of casualties of Ukrainian *siloviki* with Dnipro-petrovsk *oblast* by far the highest (Zahybli hromadyany Ukrayiny za mistem narodzhennya v mezhakh Ukrayiny 2018).

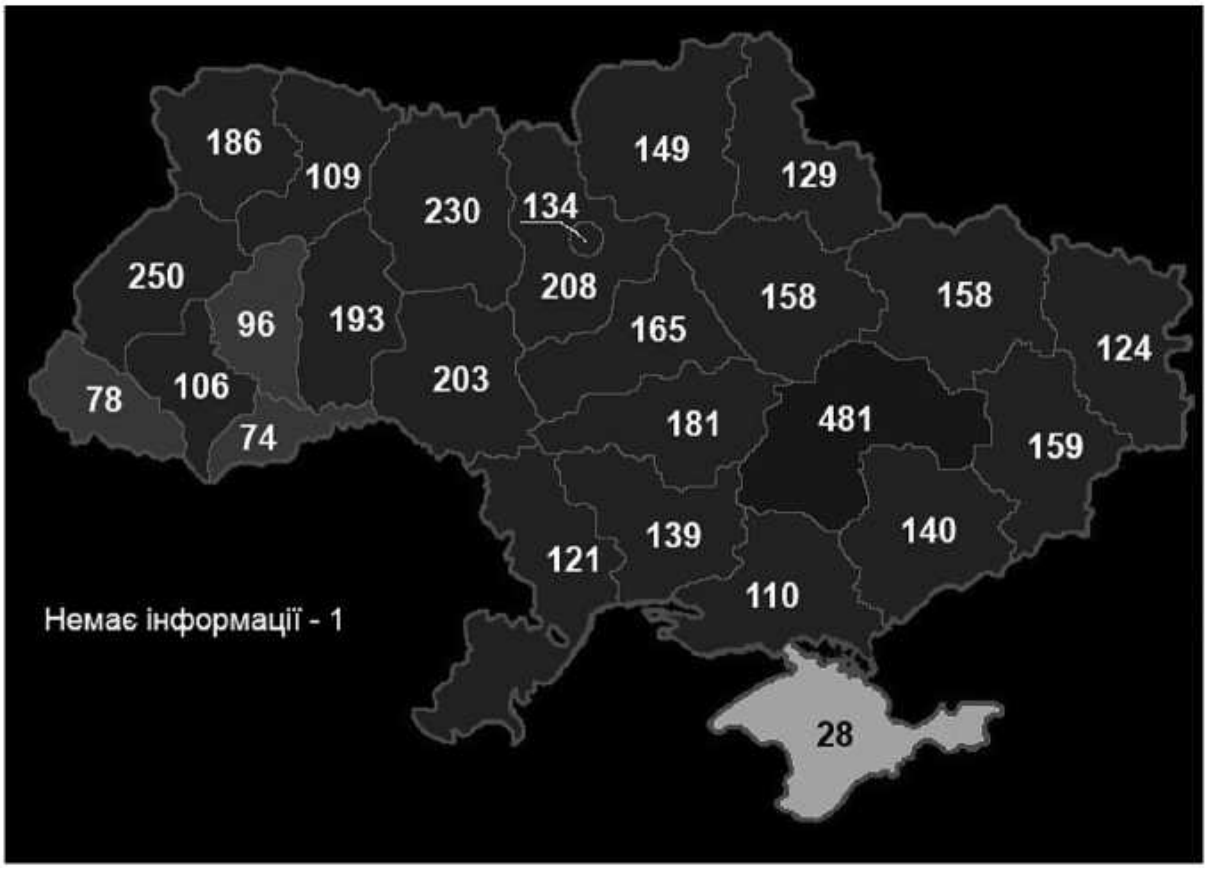

Figure 2.1 Map of Casualties of Ukrainian Security Forces by Region of Birth (data as at 10 January 2021): The highest number of casualties (481) are in Dnipropetrovsk *oblast.*

Source: http://memorybook.org.ua/indexfile/statbirth.htm.

 Ukraine in the eyes of Russian nationalists

Russian nationalists in the Soviet Union viewed Ukraine as an 'artificial' construct and were never reconciled to Ukraine's sovereignty over its southeastern regions (see Chapter 3). Solzhenitsyn was consistent from the 1970s to the early 1990s in the *Gulag Archipelago*,[8] *Rebuilding Russia* (Solzhenitsyn 1991) and his October 1991 appeal[9] about the tenuous ties of the southeastern regions to Ukraine. In Solzhenitsyn's 1973 open letter to Soviet leaders, he suggested 'lifting our trusteeship from Eastern Europe, the Baltic republics, Transcaucasia, Central Asia and possibly even from

parts of the present Ukraine'[10] (Bilinsky 1977, p.84). Solzhenitsyn (1991) repeated these views about south-eastern Ukraine in *Rebuilding Russia* and in his later statements. Putin came to agree with Solzhenitsyn.

Putin (2008, 2014a, 2014b, 2015b, 2015c, 2017, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2021) and Russian nationalists believe Ukraine to be an artificial conglomeration of territories:

1 *Crimea and Sevastopol:* an 'injustice' in 1954 had transferred these to the Ukrainian SSR; in 2014, 'historical justice' prevailed when they were returned to Russia. 86.7 percent of Ukrainians do not agree with Russia's 'historic justice' argument used to justify annexing Crimea (with only seven percent agreeing). Ukrainians do not accept Russian myths of Crimea as 'always Russian' or Sevastopol as a 'Russian hero city' (Rotaru 2018).

2 *Russian World Ukraine*: Ukrainians ('Little Russians') living in central Ukraine want to be part of the Russian World but are prevented from joining. 'Russians' living in south-eastern Ukraine ('New Russia') live in a 'Russian land' which is on loan to Ukraine as long as it remains within the Russian World. Yevgeny Kozhokin of the Russian Institute of Strategic Research, which is under the domain of Russia's *Sluzhba vneshney razvedki* (Foreign Intelligence Service - SVR), believed that 'The bulk of Ukraine's population regarded themselves as a part of Russian culture and speaking Russian.'[11] DNR Deputy Minister of Information Denys Bezsonov said Ukrainians (outside its western region) would eventually 'remember they are actually Russians.'[12] Putin is more modest, describing 'Russians' as living throughout southern Ukraine (Putin 2008). At the 2013 Valdai conference, Putin expressed his 'love' for Ukraine, but this was conditional on Ukraine adhering to common traditions, mentality, culture, history and Russian Orthodoxy. 'We are one people,' Putin said, and Ukraine is part of 'our greater Russia, or Russian-Ukrainian world' (Lewis 2020, pp.545-546).

3 *Russophobic Western Ukraine*: this region was never considered to be part of the Russian World. Ukrainian nationalists from western Ukraine and politicians such as Zelenskyy who are under their control are portrayed as alien to the 'real Ukraine' which has always wanted to be part of the

Russian World. Ukrainian nationalists do not therefore represent ‘true Ukrainians’ who were loyal to the USSR and remain loyal to Russia and the Russian World (Erlacher 2013, p.315). Igor Girkin, who’s Russian *spetsnaz* (special forces) intervened from Crimea into Ukraine in April 2014, supports a union of Ukraine with Russia -but without including Galicia (Franchetti 2015).

Putin’s views of Ukraine are rooted in these deeply held Russian nationalist views of an ‘artificial’ Ukraine and he has made countless territorial claims towards Ukraine in and since 2014 (Putin 2014a, 2014b, 2015b, 2015c, 2017, 2020a, 2020b, 2021). Putin first raised territorial questions about south-eastern Ukraine in his April 2008 speech to the NATO summit in Bucharest when he described Ukraine as an ‘artificial’ construct and in effect, an accident of history (Putin 2008; O’Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016; Kuzio 2020, pp.106-132).

Putin has repeatedly said the inhabitants of south-eastern Ukraine are ‘Russian’, Lenin wrongly included this ‘Russian’ region in the Ukrainian SSR and called the larger area ‘New Russia’ or *Prichernomorie* (Black Sea Coast Lands) (Socor 2020). Putin’s (2021) repeated questioning of why south-eastern Ukraine was included in the Ukrainian SSR legitimises Russian nationalist discourse about the ‘artificiality’ of Ukraine. In 2014, the annexation of Crimea and Putin’s rhetoric about ‘New Russia’ sent signals to the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition the Russian state no longer upheld Ukraine’s territorial status quo. In Spring 2014, these views ‘were now widely disseminated in the government-controlled press and by Russian leaders’ (D’Anieri 2019, p.235). In spring 2014, Putin gave public legitimacy to the geopolitical imagery of ‘New Russia’ (O’Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016).

Four years later, after the failure of the ‘New Russia’ project, Putin (2019) continued to send the same signal Ukraine is an ‘artificial’ country which includes ‘Russian’ territories:

Back when the Soviet Union was created, original Russian territories that never had anything to do with Ukraine (the entire Black Sea region and Russia’s western lands) were transferred to Ukraine under a strange pretext of ‘increasing the percentage of the proletariat in Ukraine,’ because Ukraine

was a rural territory populated by petty-bourgeois-minded peasants, who were subjected to dispossession across the country. This was a somewhat odd decision. Nevertheless, it took place. We are now dealing with Vladimir Lenin's legacy of state building.

As discussed in the Preface, Putin (2021) later expanded this argument into a long article which he published in Russian and in a language (Ukrainian) which he and Russian nationalists deride as a dialect.

1

Imperial: 'The Russians are defined as an imperial people or through their mission to create a supranational state' (i.e., Tsarist Empire, USSR, Eurasian Economic Union). 'Decades and sometimes centuries of existence within one state (common history) are supposed to be the basis for the continuation of a multi-ethnic state within the borders of the former USSR' (Tolz 1998a, p.995).

2

Pan-Russian Nation: 'The Russians as a nation of all eastern Slavs, united by common origin and culture.

3

Ethno-cultural similarities and a common

Russia and Ukraine: divergent approaches to history

A brief window in the Gorbachev and early Yeltsin eras facilitated Russian criticism of Tsarist and Soviet nationality policies towards Ukrainian and other non-Russian republics and brought out from obscurity ‘blank spots’ in their histories. The eclipse of Westernisers and the emergence of a dominant nationalist milieu in Russia from 1994-1996 replaced these critical narratives with more glowing accounts of Tsarist and Soviet histories. Ukrainians view the Tsarist Russian Empire and USSR in diametrically different ways to Putin and Russian nationalists. Ukrainians do not view the Tsarist Empire in a positive way and associate it with colonial rule, serfdom, national oppression and the banning of the Ukrainian language. In the Soviet Union, the ‘golden eras’ for Ukrainians are periods of liberalisation in the 1920s, the 1960s, and the Gorbachev era. For Putin and Russian nationalists these three periods are the darkest days of the Soviet Union and their ‘golden eras’ are when the USSR was ruled by Stalin, Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko.

Russian and Ukrainian views of history have been diametrically different for nearly three decades. Russians continue to believe Soviet era historical myths which Ukrainians began jettisoning in the late 1980s. The USSR promoted the concept of the cultural unity of Kyiv Rus, praised the ‘reunification’ of Ukraine and Russia in 1654 and portrayed the Tsarist Empire in a positive light. Soviet myths of Ukrainians and Russians as close peoples who had ‘reunified’ in 1654 represented ‘a refurbished imperial concept’ (Yekel-chyk, 2004, p.97). In 1954, Crimea was transferred to Ukraine on the 300th anniversary of the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav (Kasymenka 1954). In the Soviet Union, Ukraine was portrayed as a ‘“Little Russian tribe” of the Russian people’ (Yekelchyk 2004, p.97).

Tsarist and Soviet historiography buttressed an eastern Slavic identity which was meant to thwart the emergence of a Ukrainian identity separate to Russian (Rotaru 2018). Such an approach continues to be upheld by Putin (2021) who believes Ukrainians have a shared history with Russia, a shared Russian language, a shared Russian Orthodox Church and a shared victory in the Great Patriotic War (Shkandrij 2016). A shared Russian-

Ukrainian history is at the heart of an eastern Slavic identity (Shkandrij 2016), as is a shared Russian-Belarusian history. Ukrainians who claimed a history separate to Russia, such as Mykhaylo Hrushevsky (Prymak 1987, pp.65-67), and 'resist the imposition of Russian rule, a Russocentric history and identity are to be classified as the regime's opponents' (Shkandrij 2016, p.134). In Russian eyes, Hrushevsky the Socialist was as much a 'nationalist' as OUN leader Stepan Bandera.

In May 2009, President Dmitry Medvedev created a Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests. Medvedev's undiplomatic August 2009 open letter to President Viktor Yushchenko demanded and expected Ukraine to unquestionably accept Russian leadership and historical myths; in other words, pursue the eastern Slavic identity policies found in Lukashenka's Belarus. Medvedev's open letter outlined a host of demands:

Russian-Ukrainian relations are tested by your administration's review of our general historical framework, glorification of Nazi collaborators, the exaltation of the role of radical nationalists, and attempts to press the international community in supporting nationalist interpretations of the 1932-1933 famine in the USSR as a 'genocide against the Ukrainian people.' There is continued repression of the Russian language in public life, science, education, culture, media, and judicial proceedings.

(Kuzio 2015, pp.438-439)

Medvedev's unfounded allegations of pressure on the Russian language had nothing to do with reality and everything to do with refusing to accept the equality of the Russian and Ukrainian languages. Anna Fournier (2002) found opposition to the growth of the Ukrainian language was correlated less to so-called threats to the Russian language than to the refusal to accept the designation of Russians and the Russian language with 'minority' status at the same time as the elevation of Ukrainians to the titular nation and Ukrainian to a state language. Russians in the USSR had always resented being told 'they were members of the former great power nationality who must make sacrifices on behalf of the formerly oppressed nations' (Martin 2001, p.351). In the Donbas, state-sponsored Ukrainianisation (indigenisa-

tion) in the 1920s had been negatively associated with ‘Ukrainian nationalism’ (Martin 2001, p.363).

Kyiv Rus

One of the central Soviet myths was the common origins of three eastern Slavs in Kyiv Rus. Tolz (2002) had written of growing support in the late 1980s and early 1990s of Russia viewing Kyiv Rus as having two centres of power - Kyiv (as the origins of Ukrainian history) and Novgorod and Lagoda (as the origins of Russian history). Under Putin, viewing Russian history as emerging from Novgorod and Lagoda was incompatible with a great power nationalism that lay claim to the existence of a pan-Russian nation. Putin’s ‘useable history’ to buttress Russia as a great power lay in ‘Kievan Russia’ as the ‘first Russian state,’ Muscovy’s ‘gathering of Russian lands’ and Peter the Great’s Russian Empire. A Russian history beginning in Novgorod and Lagoda would only have been useful for a president intent on building a post-imperial, civic Russian nation-state.

Putin justified Russia’s annexation of Crimea because it was the location for the adoption of Christianity by what he wrongly describes as the ‘first Russian state’ (‘Kievan Russia’). Crimea was presented on Russian television as the core of the ‘Russian’ nation and spirit (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.25). Two years later, next to the Kremlin, a huge monument was unveiled to Grand Prince Vladimir (Volodymyr) who had ruled Kyiv Rus in 980-1015 over a century before Moscow was founded in 1147. The description of ‘Kievan Russia’ as the ‘first Russian state’ harked back to Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre views of a pan-Russian nation and left no room for a separate Ukrainian nation.

Over a century ago, Ukraine’s preeminent historian Hrushevsky had already raised the need to separate Ukrainian and Russian histories in *The Traditional Scheme of ‘Russian’ History and the Problem of a Rational Organisation of the History of the East Slavs* (Prymak 1987, pp.65-67).[13] Hrushevsky described ‘Halych and Volhynia, and therefore Lithuania, as the true successor state to Kyivan (Rus). Muscovite history, and therefore Russian history, were something else’ (Prymak 1987, p.65). Hrushevsky believed that ‘the traditional scheme of Russian history originating in old genealogical claims to the Kyivan heritage was inadequate, misleading, and

simply irrational' (Prymak 1987, p.65). Following the 1240 Mongol destruction of Kyiv Rus, Ukrainian and Russian peoples developed separately in the Galician-Volhynian and Vladimir-Suzdal principalities, respectively. Zelenskyy (2021)'s policies, as with those implemented by Ukrainian presidents (with the exception of Yanukovych), are influenced by Hrushevsky's national historiography.

Hrushevsky's historical framework on Kyiv Rus was used by North American historians (Subtelny 2000, pp.19-68; Magocsi 1996, pp.51-104; Magocsi 2010, pp.55-109; Plokhy 2015, pp.3-62) and adopted by politicians (Zelenskyy 2021) and historians in Ukraine. Ukrainians already believed that Kyiv Rus was the first Ukrainian state before the 2014 crisis. Between 20062018, the number of Ukrainians who claimed exclusive title to Kyiv Rus history nearly tripled from 24.5 to 70 percent. 59 percent of Ukrainians believe Kyiv Rus and other historical developments are exclusively Ukrainian, while 32 percent continue to believe Ukrainian history is part of eastern Slavic history (Razumkov Centre 2016b). A different poll conducted three years later found 70 percent of Ukrainians believed Ukraine to be the exclusive successor to Kyiv Rus with only 9 percent disagreeing (Rating Sociological Group 2018). In the decade before Ukraine received Orthodox autocephaly in 2019, the number of Ukrainians who believed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarch had descended from Kyiv Rus increased from 33 to 52 percent, while those who believed the Russian Orthodox Church was the descendant of 'Kievan Russia' declined from 26 percent to only 14 percent (Rating Sociological Group 2018).

These popular views are upheld by Ukrainian religious hierarchs and party voters. Orthodox Church of Ukraine Metropolitan Epiphanius described Ukraine as the centre of eastern Slavic Orthodoxy and the oldest eastern Slavic Church, adding that the Russian Orthodox Church had no right to claim Kyiv Rus, Grand Prince Volodymyr or the adoption of Christianity because it could only trace its roots to the 14th and 15th centuries. 54 to 62 percent of *Batkivshchina* (Fatherland) Party, *Sluha Narodu* (Servant of the People) Party, *Holos* (Voice) Party, and *Yevropeyska Solidarnist* (European Solidarity) Party voters do not believe Ukrainian history is part of eastern

Slavic history. Only pro-Russian Opposition Platform - For Life voters believe that to be true (Razumkov Centre 2019).

Tsarist Russian Empire

Another contentious question in Russian and Ukrainian history was whether there had been a harmonious past relationship between them, as Putin (2021) repeatedly claims. In the USSR, Soviet nationalities policies sought to remove historical contradictions and frictions between Russians and Ukrainians who had allegedly always lived harmoniously. A central theme of Soviet history writing from the late 1930s was the myth of friendship which claimed Tsarist rule had been beneficial or at the very least the 'lesser of evils' compared to rule by Polish, Ottoman and other empires (see Tillet 1969). Russian nationalist and imperial history, as well as Eurasianism (see Chapter 6) rejected the very notion of past conflicts in Russian-Ukrainian relations. Ukrainians had allegedly wanted to join the Tsarist Russian Empire, had benefitted from their inclusion and together with Russians had progressed (see Putin 2021). A similar mythical interpretation of voluntarism and progress was used to reject Ukrainian accusations about the Soviet system.

Ukrainians who had complained of life in the Tsarist Russian Empire or the Soviet Union were in the pay of Western conspirators while those seeking to separate Ukraine into an independent state, whether early 18th century Cossack Hetman Pavlo Mazepa or Bandera, were 'traitors.' Myroslaw Shkandrij (2016, p.129) writes: 'The Russian media constantly tries to make a connection between independence, *Banderites* and fascism.'

Ukrainians held deep seated grievances towards Tsarist Russian and Soviet policies promoting de-nationalisation, Russification, the murder of intellectual and cultural elites, and the destruction of Ukrainian Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches. National communists, dissidents, and nationalists demanded changes in how Soviet historiography treated Ukraine's past and they called for the rehabilitation of repressed figures. During periods of liberalisation these demands were published in official Soviet publications as well as more commonly in *samvydav* and emigre publications. Since 1991 in Ukraine, official discourse, government policies, presidential decrees, party political programmes, state education,

and scholarly work have taken all of these issues on board and Ukrainian historiography has become more critical of Ukraine's experience in the Tsarist Empire and Soviet Union.

1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav

Soviet nationalities policies and historical myths continue to influence Russian politicians, policies and attitudes towards Ukraine. When the USSR used the term 'reunification' it combined 'elements of the old pre-Soviet Russian nationalism with Soviet-era recognition of the existence of a separate Ukrainian nation' (Plokhy 2001, pp.492-493). Putin and contemporary Russian nationalists continue to believe that the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav between Ukraine and Muscovy was a 'reunion' of two 'Russian' peoples who were born together in the 'first Kievan Russian state' and are fated to always live together. While Russians have continued using the loaded term 'reunification,' Ukrainians stopped using it as far back as the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The Soviet regime turned Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyy into a hero and an example of how Ukrainians had always sought unity with Russia, as reflected in the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav. Ukrainians were more critical of Khmelnytskyy and in his poem *Subotiv,* Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's 19th century national bard, provided a damning critique of the Cossack Hetman, writing: 'Their gain has been our loss; The Muscovites have snatched away all that they came across; And now they rend the burial mounds in search of further loot;' ending with 'You've ruined derelict Ukraine.' The treaty was critically appraised by historians and dissidents in Soviet Ukraine. After Soviet Ukrainian historian Mykhaylo Braychevskyy's (1974) *Annexation or Reunification?* text was turned down by *Ukrayinsky Istorychnyy Zhurnal* (Ukrainian Historical Journal), the official journal of the Institute of History, Soviet Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, it was circulated in *samvydav* and published in the West (see Basarab 1982).

Since 1991, the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav has come under greater scrutiny and critical appraisal in new generations of history writing in Ukraine and translations of Western histories of Ukraine (see Subtelny 1988, pp.134-136; Magocsi 1996, pp.207-216; Magocsi 2010, pp.221-230; Plokhy 2015, pp.103107). At the heart of the controversy was another example of how

Ukrainians and Russians disagree about their histories. Ukrainians do not see 1654 as a ‘reunion’ but as a defensive alliance of two equal countries akin to the 1707 union of England and Scotland (see Velychenko 1997). Russian politicians and historians see the Treaty of Pereyaslav as Ukraine’s ‘re-union’ and submission under the Muscovite Tsar.

Stalinism, the Holodomor *and decommunisation*

Russia and Ukraine have radically diverged in their attitudes towards Stalinism. This should be not surprising as for a very long period of time the British and Irish also viewed the Irish *Gorta Mor* (Great Famine) of 18451852 very differently. Michael Hechter (2021, p.145) describes Ukraine and Ireland as ‘internal colonies’ who because of their ‘inferior political status’ were countries where:

alien rulers are typically indifferent to the welfare of the residents of the culturally distinctive regions within their borders. Due to this indifference, both the British and Soviet central rulers cast a blind eye to the fate of the Irish and Ukrainian peasants.

Russia’s re-Sovietisation and promotion of a cult of Stalin contrasts with Ukraine’s long-term de-Stalinisation and more recent decommunisation (Kuzio 2017a; Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021). Although Stalin murdered many Russians this is less important for Putin and a large majority of Russians than the *generalissimo* winning the Great Patriotic War, creating an eastern European empire and building a nuclear superpower. Ukraine’s condemnation of the *Holodomor* as a genocide is attacked by Russian information warfare as a ‘Russophobic concept.’[14] Russia has returned to pre-Gorbachev denial of the *Holodomor* having taken place. In the 1980s, research and publications about the *Holodomor* in the Ukrainian diaspora was a US conspiracy to fight the USSR[15] and invented by ‘British spy’ Robert Conquest (1986). Conquest was a well-known and highly respected British historian.[16]

Russia’s rehabilitation of Stalin is being undertaken alongside a cult of *Ivan Grozny* (Ivan the Terrible), one of the cruellest leaders in Russian history who ruled Muscovy from 1530—1584.[17] Ivan the Terrible massacred the

inhabitants of Novgorod and murdered his own son. Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev (2021) nevertheless condemned criticism of Ivan Terrible as Western 'Russophobia:'[18]

They tried to blacken our country many centuries ago. Take, for example, Ivan the Terrible, who for some reason is called the Terrible in the West. The 'Black Legend' about him as a cruel tyrant began to come into circulation during the tsar's lifetime at the suggestion of Western chroniclers who wanted to divert the attention of Europeans from what was happening in their countries. They did not like the fact that the Russian tsar did not recognise their political and moral leadership. Because even in those distant times, Moscow carefully looked at the West and saw what was happening there. Massacres for religious reasons, the Inquisition, the witch hunt, the monstrous colonial enslavement of peoples, and other deeds that the West now prefers not to remember.

De-Stalinisation and raising the awareness of the *Holodomor* began in the Ukrainian diaspora in 1983 on its 50th anniversary, spread to Soviet Ukraine in the Gorbachev era and received state support from 1991. President Kuchma initiated an international campaign for countries to recognise the 1933 *Holodomor* as a 'genocide.' President Yushchenko increased state support for commemoration of the *Holodomor* and parliament adopted legislation defining it as a 'genocide' (Kuzio 2017a). Stalin's crimes against humanity and organisation of the *Holodomor* are defining moments in Ukrainian national identity for Ukrainians. A November 2017 poll found that 77 percent of Ukrainians believed the *Holodomor* was a genocide, including 65 percent in the South and 56 percent in the East of Ukraine (Rating Sociological Group 2017; Kuzio 2017a). Three years later, the same sociological group found 82 percent of Ukrainians believed the *Holodomor* was a genocide (11 percent did not), ranging from 72 and 61 percent in the South and East to 87 and 92 percent in the Centre and West of Ukraine, respectively (Rating Sociological Group 2019).[19] The Sovietisation of Russian politics under Putin has taken place alongside a far longer de-Sovietisation and decommunisation of Ukrainian politics (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2009; Kuzio 2017a). While a significant majority of Ukrainians believe Stalin is a tyrant an equally high number of Russians believe he is hero (Kuzio 2017a). In Russia, re-

Stalinisation has led to a record number of 70 percent of Russians holding a positive view of Stalin with half of Russians ready to excuse his crimes against humanity (Levada Centre 2019).

Sarah E. Mendelson and Theodore P. Gerber (2005-2006) persuasively argue a regime's encouragement and pursuit of Soviet nostalgia is incompatible with democratisation, as witnessed in both Russia and Belarus. Soviet nostalgia, the denial, minimising and excusing of Stalin's crimes against humanity, and rehabilitation of Stalin are compatible with authoritarian systems (Russia, Belarus) but not with a democracy (Ukraine). 'A human rights culture cannot flourish in Russia as long as Stalin's legacies persist,' Mendelson and Gerber (2005-2006, p.95) wrote. In being unable or unwilling to ditch its Soviet past, Russia was a 'continuator-state' (Kolsto 2000, p. 204). Since 1991, Russia and Belarus have become 'consolidated authoritarian regimes' under Putin and Lukashenka, respectively,[20] while Ukraine undertook an uneven 'quadruple transition' (Kuzio 2001a). Freedom House has ranked Ukraine 'Partly Free' and 'Free' since 1991.

Euromaidan leaders believed there were national security ramifications to the decommunisation process because regions with the highest levels of Soviet nostalgia (e.g., Crimea, the Donbas) were also where the strongest pro-Russian movements were to be found (Hrytsenko 2019, pp.28-30). In Ukraine, de-Stalinisation and decommunisation have therefore buttressed Ukraine's democratisation process (Kuzio 2017a; Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021). Human rights are massively infringed in Russian occupied Crimea and Donbas where Russian proxies are promoting the same cult of Stalin as that found in Putin's Russia (Coynash 2021).

In April 2015 the adoption of four decommunisation laws led to a fundamental break with Soviet and contemporary Russian historical myths (Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021). These four laws: [1]

Conclusions

This chapter has analysed how Russia and Ukraine emerged from the Soviet experience with different legacies, launched state and nation building

policies with different goals, and over the last three decades have fundamentally diverged in their political regimes, national identities and foreign policies. Russian and Ukrainian elites who took control of independent states in 1991-1992 came from very different Soviet backgrounds and inherited republics where state building policies were constructed top down in Russia and bottom up in Ukraine. Putin has built a militocracy and consolidated authoritarian regime where the *siloviki* run Russia. A cult of Stalinism has encouraged Russia's move away from democratisation. Ukraine built a civic nation-state and hybrid democracy and its de-Stalinisation (prior to 2014) and decommunisation (since 2015) have encouraged democratisation.

Since 1991, Russia and Ukraine have pursued fundamentally different strategies; Russia has been unable to decide where the borders of its 'imagined community' are to be found while Ukraine has always accepted its former Soviet republican borders. The dominance of great power nationalism since 1994-1996 in Russia has reinforced a deeply held identity that supports unions and empires over a civic nation-state while Ukraine has focused on civic nation building within its internationally accepted borders. Russians will continue to believe the 'ancient Russian land' of Ukraine should pursue the eastern Slavic nationality policies undertaken in the former USSR and by Lukashenka in Belarus. As Chapters 1 and 2 show, Ukraine was never going to be a 'Belarus-2' prior to 2014 while Putin's annexation of Crimea and ongoing military aggression ensures this will never be a future outcome.

Notes

1 *Itar-Tass*, 9 October 1999.

2 (Russia) https://freedomhouse.org/country/russia/nations-transit/2020.

3 (Georgia) https://freedomhouse.org/country/georgia/nations-transit/2020; (Moldova) https://freedomhouse.org/country/moldova/nations-transit/2020; and (Ukraine) http s://freedomhouse.org/country/ukraine/nations-transit/2020.

4 Igor Chubais, 'Novoye Rossiiskaya Ideia,' *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 19 September 1996; Sergei Mytrofanov, 'Muzhna li nam Russkaya Ideia?' *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 18 October 1996; and Andrei Zahorodnikov, '"Natsionalnaya Ideya" ili "ideya natsii"?' *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 19 October 1996.

5 *Vysokyy Zamok*, 12-18 September 1997.

6 https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2019/10/23/156416; and https://www.radios voboda.org/a/news-ivan-honcharuk/31230230.html.

7 'Who is Afraid of Russophobia?' *EU Disinformation Review*, 25 February 2021. https://euvsdisinfo.eu/who-is-afraid-of-russophobia.

8 *Gulag Archipelago*, Part 5, Chapter 2.

9 *Trud*, 8 October 1991.

10 https://www.nytimes.com/1974/03/03/archives/solzhenitsyn-asks-kremlin-to-aba ndon-communism-and-split-up-soviet.html.

11 *Vek*, no.6, 1998.

12 Prime-Time Russian TV, 5 November 2019, Kyiv: Hybrid Warfare Analytical Group.

13 The original text was published by the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg in 1904 and was published in the Ukrainian language in part 1 of its prestigious *Stati po Slavianovedeniu* edited by V.I. Lamanskyj. Thank you to Thomas Prymak for this.

14 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/russophobic-historical-concepts-including-so-called-h olodomor-genocide-have-brought-ukraine-to-a-civil-war; and https://www.thegua rdian.com/world/2016/oct/21/ivan-the-terrible-cult-strongman-leader-tsars-popula rity-rise-russia.

15 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/pending-check-there-is-no-evidence-of-holodomor-in-ukraine-it-was-a-us-tool-against-the-ussr.

16 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/holodomor-was-a-story-invented-by-a-british-spy#:~:text=The%20genocidal%20famine%20was%20an,Press%2C%20the%20CIA%20publication%20house.&text=The%20Holodomor%20was%20an%20man,threat%20 to%20the%20Soviet%20regime.

17 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/14/russias-first-monument-to-ivan-th e-terrible-inaugurated.

18 https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/putin-ally-nikolai-patrushev-rewrites-history-to praise-ivan-the-not-so-terrible-g06p03gkf.

19 http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/dinamika_otnosheniya_k_golodomoru_193 2-33_gg.html.

20 https://freedomhouse.org/country/russia/nations-transit/2020; and https://freedom house.org/country/belarus/nations-transit/2020.

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[1]

Banned 'totalitarian' (i.e., Nazi Germany and Soviet/Communist) symbols. By 2020, the only monuments of Lenin still standing in Ukraine were in Russian occupied Crimea and the DNR and LNR. Tens of thousands of toponymical names have been changed to non-communist names.

2 Opened Soviet security service archives, making them the most accessible in the former USSR outside the three Baltic states.

3 Rehabilitated a wide range of 'fighters' for Ukrainian independence.

4 Broadened the existing celebration of the Great Patriotic War on 9 May (1941-1945) with a holiday on 8 May (1939-1945), as throughout Europe, commemorating the end of World War II.

Part II: Russian Nationalism about Ukraine

3 Russian nationalism and Ukraine Emigres, dissidents and Soviets

Throughout this century, only a very few Russian intellectuals ever dealt seriously with the Ukrainian problem.

Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, p.X

White Russian emigres held negative attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians and an indifference and hostility to complaints of de-nationalisation and Russification. Russian emigres were predominantly nationalist, imperialist and Eur-asianist, three ideological traditions which are dominant in Russian politics today. Anti-imperialist democrats were few in number for much of the Cold War and their numbers only began to grow in Russian emigres from the late 1970s and 1980s. In the USSR, liberalism was confined to a small, but brave group of dissidents primarily based in Moscow. National democrats, who bridged the liberal and far right nationalist spectrum, did not exist in Soviet Russia. As Chapter 6 shows, Russia is still finding it difficult to create a national democratic political constituency over half a century after they had begun to constitute the main opposition in Ukraine, the three Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and Georgia and Armenia.

Russian emigres had far less unity of purpose in fighting against Soviet power (Suslensky 1983, p.239) than their Ukrainian counterparts. The main enemy of Russian emigres was limited to communism with the union remaining but transformed into an empire. Solzhenitsyn proposed a ‘Russian Union’ of the eastern Slavs.

All Ukrainian emigre groups were fighting the Soviet Russian empire and communism and their goal was a Ukrainian independent state. Ukrainian nationalist emigres viewed the Soviet regime as their mortal enemy; four nationalist leaders were assassinated by the Soviet secret services: Symon

Petlura (Paris, 1926), Yeven Konovalets (Rotterdam, 1938), Lev Rebet (Munich, 1957) and Stepan Bandera (Munich, 1959). Alexander Shelepin was a member of the ‘Russian Party’ in the Soviet Communist Party and as KGB Chairman, Shelepin organised the assassinations of the latter two Ukrainian emigre nationalist leaders. Shelepin awarded KGB officer Bohdan Stashinskyy the Order of the Red Banner for conducting ‘an important government commission’ (Barron 1975, pp.315-316).

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In the USSR, official and dissident Russian nationalists both opposed the dismantling of the USSR. Neither recognised the existence of a Ukraine separate from Russia and both believed Ukrainians were one of three branches of the pan-Russian nation. Russian nationalists were tolerated by the Soviet regime while dissident nationalists offered to collaborate with it. Nationalist opposition groups within Ukraine viewed the Soviet regime as a ‘Russian occupation’ and could never collaborate with it.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first analyses Russian emigres and how they came to be dominated prior to and during the Cold War by great power nationalists, chauvinists and imperialists. This section compares successful Polish-Ukrainian and Jewish-Ukrainian reconciliation with unsuccessful attempts at Russian-Ukrainian dialogue. The second section analyses Russian nationalist dissent, official Russian nationalism in the USSR and how these two trends influenced the development of Russian nationalism in the late 1980s and 1990s.

Emigres

Russians

Different forms of Russian nationalism have been influential since the late 19th century. Some of these developed into fascist ideologies in the inter-war era. John J. Stephan (1978, p.373) writes that Vladimir Purishkevich, leader of the *Chernosotentsy, Soiuz Russkogo Naroda* (Black Hundred ‘Union of Russian People’) was ‘the first Russian fascist.’ *Pamiat* (Memory) in the late 1980s and RNE in post-Soviet Russia were Russia’s

first contemporary neoNazi political forces. Black Hundred nationalists and neo-Nazis were active in Odesa as early as March 2014 when Raevskiy was detained and deported from Ukraine; he returned later that year to fight for Russian proxy forces in the DNR and LNR (see the Preface). Contemporary Black Hundreds were recruited to support the 'Russian Spring' by the White emigre Russian All-Military Union founded in 1924 (Schreck and Volchek 2016).

In the post-war era the main Russian emigre organisation NTS, believed it was continuing the struggle of White Russian leaders, such as General Lavr Kornilov and the *Russkaia Osvoboditelnaia Armiia* (Russian Liberation Movement - ROA) during World War II. ROA's ideological borrowing from NTS was 'very significant on the liberation movement' (Andreyev 1989, p.170). NTS 'corresponded to nationalist feelings to be found among supporters of the Russian liberation Movement' (Andreyev 1989, p.191). In late 1944, former Soviet General Andrey Vlasov's ROA became the *Komitet Osvobozhdeniia Narodov Rossii* (Armed Forces of the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia - VS KONR). ROA and KONR never included prominent Ukrainians and other non-Russian representatives. In 1945, the commander of the Ukrainian National Army General Shandruk viewed ROA 'with the utmost suspicion' because of its conflation of the Russian empire with a Russian nation-state (Andreyev 1989, pp.132). In the late 1940s the CIA, America's newly founded intelligence agency, established the American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia which took over many of KONR's functions, but it continued to be boycotted by Ukrainians.

The inability of Russians to understand Ukrainian concerns was a product of how White Russian emigres ignored, downplayed and never understood the nationalities question in the USSR. KONR barely mentioned the nationalities question and Ukraine in particular (Andreyev 1989, pp.131132, 170, 187, 189, 191). The Vlasov movement's December 1942 Smolensk and November 1944 Prague Statements each devoted only a sentence to the nationality question.[1] NTS and its Free Russian Publishing House *Posev* in Frankfurt am Main similarly ignored the nationalities question in the USSR.

Russian nationalists, whether ROA, NTS or other groups, never supported the disintegration of the USSR. KONR, seeking to attract Ukrainians and other non-Russians, was divided over attitudes to independence for the different nationalities of the USSR (Andreyev 1989, p.128). The ROA rallying cry of 'nationalism and unity!' did not equate nationalism with separatism but with great power nationalism in defence of a Russian-led union. ROA's 'Russia, one and indivisible' nationalism (Andreyev 1989, p.157) was inconsistent with the Ukrainian nationalist goal of an independent state.

NTS had been created by young White Russian emigres in Belgrade in July 1930, disillusioned with both the older generation of Whites and Western democracies. Their Solidarist and *Sobornost* ideology was similar to that found in fascist ideology. NTS was critical of liberal democracy and capitalism, backed a one-party authoritarian state, religious morality and anticommunism in the belief that these policies would lead to national and social integration and a revival of 'Russia' (Andreyev 1989, pp.187-189). In the inter-war era, the older generation of emigres had been closer to German Nazis while the younger generation (i.e., NTS, the Young Russia Movement and National Toilers [formerly the National Union of the New Generation]) leaned towards Italian, Spanish and Portuguese fascism (Laqueur 1993, pp.16-30, 74).

After World War II, NTS propagated a so-called 'third force' of Russia neither with Stalin nor Hitler. Surprisingly they continued, like all Russian nationalists, to reject liberal democracy even while accepting US government support which provided them with the resources to covertly distribute the greatest volume of literature in the USSR of any Russian emigre group (Laqueur 1993, p.84). Nevertheless, NTS was unpopular in Soviet Russia where official Russian nationalism was tolerated, and the Soviet Communist Party was under the influence of national Bolshevism.

Before the USSR was even formed, White Russian emigre Prince Alexandre Wolkonsky (1920, p.169) commented favourably on the 'Russian character' of Bolshevism. From the 1930s, White Russian emigres looked favourably at what they saw as the growth of great power Russian nationalism within the Soviet regime, a trend which led them to support

cooperation with the Soviet authorities. White Russian emigres became enamoured with Stalin's national Bolshevism which closely resembled their Eurasianism (Clover 2016, p.65). White Russian emigre Eurasianists praised Stalin, just as many contemporary Russian emigres have a fondness for Putin, and they came to drink 'from the same well' (Clover 2016, p.66).

In 1978, NTS welcomed the growing influence of the 'Russia Party' within the 'ruling strata' of the Soviet Communist Party who were emerging as 'constructive forces' (Yanov 1978, p.60). With official Russian nationalism supported by the Soviet regime, Russian emigres were again enamoured with the Soviet regime. Russian nationalist dissident Vladimir Osipov expressed loyalty to the Soviet regime, declaring his 'support to the state in the face of external threats' (Yanov 1978, p.71; Joo 2008, p.223). Gleb Rahr was a leading member of NTS and his son, well-known expert on Russia Alexander Rahr, is a member of Germany's *Putinversteher* community. A more contemporary example is Skripal who, although subjected to a horrific chemical attack undertaken by Putin's GRU, remains a Russian nationalist and supporter of Putin's military aggression against Ukraine (Urban 2018, pp.208, 240).

Eurasianism was developed by young Russian emigres in inter-war Europe and spread to Gorbachev's USSR in the late 1980s and 1990s Russia. Its influence was found in the KGB and its successors *Federalnaya sluzhba bezopasnosti* (Federal Security Service - FSB) and SVR, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and KPRF, Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Soviet and Russian Academy of Sciences. Eurasianism, which was better placed than NTS nationalism to appeal to post-Soviet Russian grievances and frustrations, fanned chauvinistic and racial-supremacist attitudes towards Russia's neighbours. 'Great Russians,' Eurasianists believed, were a super ethnos whose destiny is to control the Eurasian heartland, there is no Ukraine or Ukrainians and Jews are a 'parasite ethnos' (Yasmann 1992, p.26). Clover (2016, pp.20, 65) described Eurasianism as therapy for three generations of Russians to explain the Bolshevik Revolution and their exile, Stalinist reality and the disintegration of the USSR. The 'national Bolshevism' of Stalin and 'the imperial deal of a great power' began to look very much like the political programme of Eurasianists (Alexeyeva 1985, p.434).

Russians, Poles and Ukrainians

Solzhenitsyn is the most well-known and prolific Russian nationalist dissident. He met numerous Ukrainians in the Gulag, some of whom were members of the UPA who had fought against Nazi and Soviet forces from 1942 until the mid-1950s. Solzhenitsyn admired these UPA prisoners for their courage in organising uprisings of prisoners in the early 1950s in the Gulag and fighting the camp authorities. Timothy Snyder (2003, pp. 207, 229) described UPA as the 'most impressive example of popular resistance to communist power in wartime and post-war Europe' which fought 'with courage, tenacity and brutality.' Possibly because of these encounters, Solzhenitsyn also recognised that Ukraine had a stronger nationalist movement than Belarus. Nevertheless, Solzhenitsyn supported the bulk of Ukraine as part of a Russian Union and questioned its sovereignty over its south-eastern regions.

After the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn from the USSR in 1974 and the growth of emigre Russian nationalist publications, dissident Russian nationalists and democratic dissidents parted ways (Alexeyeva 1985, pp.431-439). Russian nationalists who emigrated or were expelled to the West increased the strength of an already dominant Russian nationalist emigre community which had existed since the 1920s. *Veche*, *Kontinent* and *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenija* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement) added to the long-established NTS-run (and US government-funded) *Posev* publishing house. Different generations of Russian emigre nationalists agreed on the need to preserve the USSR as a Russian Empire. Russian democrats only arrived as emigres in the late 1970s and 1980s and published magazines such as *Strana i Mir* (Our Country and the World) and *Forum* in Munich, also both with US government funding; the latter was published by the Ukrainian emigre Prolog Corporation (see Kuzio 2012).

In North America, Ukrainian emigres were in the forefront of promoting the study of the non-Russian republics in the former USSR and Soviet nationality problems. They were opposed by Russo-centric Sovietology which focused on 'Kremlinology,' downplayed the nationality question in the USSR and ignored the non-Russians. The disintegration of the USSR led to some soul searching among scholars as to why they had ignored

nationality problems in the USSR (Subtelny 1994). The launch of the journal *Nationalities Papers* was an initiative of Ukrainian-American and Latvian-American emigre scholars. Financial support initially came from the New York-based Shevchenko Scientific Society, a scholarly institution which had been founded in 1873 in Lviv, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the first issue of *Nationalities Papers*, Ukrainian-American historian Stephen M. Horak (1972) published an introductory statement.

Michael Rywkin (2012) described how the journal came about:

The ASN (originally known as Association for the Study of Nationalities: USSR and Eastern Europe), founded in 1972 by a group of emigre scholars, mostly members of the Shevchenko Scientific Society, was originally registered in the state of Illinois, where the head of the new association, Stefan Horak, was initially working as a librarian at the University of Northern Illinois. He and his friends saw a need to give emigre scholars interested in nationalities affairs a genuine academic platform in the form of their own conference panels and specialized publications. Initial ASN members were practically all Ukrainian of Latvian emigres, little known outside their own milieu, persons who usually landed in less prestigious colleges and universities after being often dismissed by established scholars as mere ‘informers’ about nationalities issues, whose biased views about the persistence of strong national conscience within the national republics of the USSR could not be relied upon.

Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Adviser from 1977 to 1981, supported the study of the non-Russians and nationality problems in the USSR. In the 1980s, during Ronald Reagan’s presidency, the CIA increased funding for emigre groups, including Ukrainian such as the Prolog Research Corporation. At the US State Department, Paul Goble edited the in-house publication *Soviet Nationalities Survey.* Scholar Alexander J. Motyl and NED (National Endowment for Democracy) expert on the former USSR, Nadia Diuk edited *Soviet Nationality Survey* which was published in London with financing from the Prolog Research Corporation (see Kuzio 2012).

During the Cold War, Polish-Ukrainian (Potichnyj 1980) and Jewish-Ukrainian reconciliation and dialogue (Potichnyj and Aster 1988) made

remarkable progress. This though was not the case with Russian and Ukrainian scholars and writers because of the difficulty in finding post-imperial Russian scholars and writers with whom a dialogue could be launched (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski, and Zekulin 1992).

Most Polish nationalists felt defeated by the outcome of World War II which had fundamentally changed their country's borders. Some supporters of *Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy - *Endecja)*, traditionally pro-Russian and antagonistic towards Germans and Ukrainians, supported the creation of a mono-ethnic Polish nation-state, albeit communist. Poland's imperial, 'civilising mission' in the east came to an end after western Ukraine was annexed by the Soviet Union and incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR. In 1944-1946, the Polish population in western Ukraine was repatriated to Communist Poland making western Ukraine also ethnically homogenous.

There were Polish emigres who also accepted Poland's new borders, welcomed an end to its imperial missions and unlike *Endecja*, looked favourably at attempts at reconciliation with Ukrainians. From the 1950s, Polish and Ukrainian emigre groups discussed reconciliation and relations in a postcommunist world on the pages of the Polish journals *Kultura* (Culture), *Aneks* (Annex), *Libertas* (Liberty), and *Kontakt* and in the Ukrainian journals *Suchasnist* (Contemporary) and *Vidnova* (Recovery),[2] as well as at intellectual conferences (Potichnyj 1980).[3] Two Polish-language double issues of *Suchasnist* devoted to Ukrainian-Polish relations (one of which was edited by a Polish oppositionist and another by this author) were published by the Polish underground in the 1980s (Kuzio 1987, 2012). The driver of these conferences was Petro Potichnyj,[4] professor at Canada's prestigious McMaster University who had been an officer in the UPA and was long-time editor of *Litopys UPA* (Chronicles of the UPA) publications series.[5]

US financial support facilitated dialogue because the Polish and Ukrainian groups who did not have to financially rely on the nationalistic Polish and Ukrainian communities. Polish emigre groups who refused to accept territorial changes and holding bitter memories of the Polish-Ukrainian civil war in the 1940s, retained their visceral dislike of Ukrainians on the pages

of Britain's *Dziennik Polski* and *Tydzieni Polski.* [6] Some Ukrainian nationalist emigres were likewise uninterested in reconciliation with Poles.

During the Cold War, the US government funded and supported influential publishing houses and publications:

1 *Russian Emigres:* NTS (Soldatov and Borogan 2019, pp.79-81; Tromly 2019; pp.73-143), *Strana i Mir,* and *Forum.*

2 *Ukrainian Emigres:* Prolog Research Corporation and *Suchasnist* (Kuzio 2012), and *Vidnova.*

3 *Polish Emigres:* Instytut Literacki w ParyZu, *Kultura* and *Zeszyty Historyczne* (Jones 2018, pp.10, 61-62, 132, 139, 152, 163, 175, 200, 235-236, 240, 247, 266, 281, 296, 301, 304-305),[7] *Aneks*, *Libertas* and *Kontakt.*

The US financed the extreme nationalist NTS because there was very little else among Russian emigres for the majority of the Cold War. Ukrainian and Polish organisations and publications funded by the US government were democratically oriented. In a London meeting in April 1951, the CIA refused to work with the Bandera wing of OUN which they felt was not 'acceptable' to them. The British intelligence service MI6 (SIS) disagreed and expressed an interest in continuing to work with the most radical Ukrainian nationalist organisation.[8]

In the 1980s during martial law in Poland, underground publications under the influence of *Kultura* initiated an extensive discussion about Polish policy towards its eastern neighbours and in particular towards Ukrainians. Polish underground journals *ABC: Adriatyk, Baltyk, Morze Czarne* (ABC: Adriatic, Baltic, Black Sea), *Miedzymorze* (Between the Seas), *Nowa Koalicja* (New Coalition), and *Zona* (Zone), participated in this discussion (see Kuzio 1987). In 1978, the election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla as Pope John Paul II, on the eve of the emergence of the Solidarity movement, added support to emigre and Polish opposition efforts at achieving Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation.

Except in a small number of cases, Russian and non-Russian emigre political groups failed to cooperate in the Cold War. Ukrainian diaspora

scholars reached out to Russian scholars in North America, but they also had little success. The organisers of a Ukrainian-Russian conference in the early 1980s in North America raised the question of how Ukrainians were meant to be 'the eternal younger brother who has no right to mature and is consigned to perpetual mediocrity. He has no right to an independent existence; he must forever be attached to his older Russian brother' (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, p.XII). This complaint made four decades ago remains pertinent today, resonating with Russia's fixed-in-stone approach to Russian-Ukrainian history. Continuing their line of thought they warned, as if seeing the 2014 crisis through a crystal ball, 'Any originality on his part is regarded as an unforgivable crime and is punished mercilessly' (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, p.XII).

There were no organised Russian emigre groups (as opposed to individual emigres and former dissidents) analogous to Polish emigres which rejected their country's imperial past. Although democratic and left-wing Russians existed, primarily in the USA, they were uninfluential compared to the myriad of imperialist, nationalist, monarchist and Eurasianist groups who denied the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Russian emigre groups did not therefore follow their Polish counterparts in adopting anti-imperial positions.

Among Ukrainian emigre groups there was a plurality of political views ranging from pro-Soviet Communist to radical nationalist. Pro-Soviet Ukrainians in Canada accounted for half of the members of that country's Communist Party. There was a smaller group of Canadian Ukrainians loyal to Ukrainian national communists in the 1920s and Leon Trotsky[9] who published the Ukrainian-language journal *Dialoh* (Dialogue) and English-language magazine *Meta* (Aims). Democratically inclined Ukrainians who supported steps towards Polish-Ukrainian and Russian-Ukrainian reconciliation included:

1 *zakordonne predstavnytstvo Ukrayinska Holovna Vyzvolna Rada* (external representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council -zpUHVR)[10] established the Prolog Research Corporation in New York in 1952 and *Suchasnist* publishing house in Munich (Panchenko 2004; Kaminskyy 2009; Kuzio 2012). *Suchasnist* took the unique step among Ukrainian

emigres of publishing a Russian-language journal, *Forum*, edited by Russian dissident and member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group Vladimir Malynkovych who had been expelled to the West in 1979. zpUHVR condemned anti-Semitism ('Anti-Zionism') in the USSR.[11]

2 *Orhanizatsiya Ukrainskykh Natsionalistiv - za kordonom* (Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists abroad - OUNz)[12] (Krychevskyy 1962) was the wing of OUN aligned with zpUHVR which split from Bandera in 1954.

3 *Ukrayinska Revolyutsiyna Demokratychna Partiya* (Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party - URDP) was the main emigre party uniting political refugees from south-eastern Ukraine.

The failure of Russian-Ukrainian dialogue reflected the inability of Russians and Ukrainian opposition nationalists to find much ground inside the USSR and since. Inside the USSR, Ukrainian dissidents and members of the opposition cooperated with Russian liberal dissidents in Moscow but stayed clear of Russian nationalists. In the Gorbachev era, liberal Russian and Ukrainian cultural elites, scholars and oppositionists cooperated in the pursuit of *glasnost* but from 1990, when Ukrainian demands for independence grew, the relationship began to fray. Russian liberals could never fathom why Ukrainians supported the disintegration of the USSR and independence.

Ukrainian emigre intellectuals attempted to organise a conference on Russian-Ukrainian relations similar to the successful Polish-Ukrainian one which had been held in the early 1980s. A conference did go ahead but it proved to be disappointing and none of the papers were by Russian emigres. Solzhenitsyn was invited but declined to attend. In an open letter to the conference, Solzhenitsyn complained about Ukrainian emigre groups blaming Russians for communism (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, pp.332-335). The publication of the conference proceedings had to wait until after the disintegration of the USSR (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992).[13]

Within Ukrainian emigres the equation of Russia with Soviet communism was limited to the Bandera wing of OUN and was not influential among

moderate emigres (Kaminskyy 2009; Kuzio 2012). Typically, with Russian nationalists, Solzhenitsyn wanted it both ways: as an emigre he condemned the link between Russians and communism but after he returned to Russia he grew closer to former KGB officer Putin who had no qualms in linking the two (Horvath 2011). Solzhenitsyn's anti-Soviet nationalist dissent had arrived at the same place as earlier generations of dissident Russian nationalists in wanting to cosy up to the Kremlin. Putin's regime was happy with this state of affairs, using Solzhenitsyn's name to institutionalise an authoritarian regime, legitimise its anti-Western Xenophobia and condemn Ukraine's Orange Revolution (Horvath 2011, p.317).

During the Gorbachev era and in post-Soviet Russia, Solzhenitsyn's nationalism became more extreme. On the eve of the disintegration of the USSR, Solzhenitsyn outlined his concept of a Russian Union (of the eastern Slavs) to replace the Soviet Union. Solzhenitsyn believed Ukrainians and Russians were 'one people' who had been artificially divided, an echo of how Russian leaders under Putin came to view Ukrainians. In *Rebuilding Russia*, Solzhenitsyn (1991) wrote that an independent Ukraine could only exist without 'New Russia or Crimea or Donbas and areas practically to the Caspian Sea' which should be allowed 'self-determination.' Jaroslaw Pelenski, replying to Solzhenitsyn's open letter to the Ukrainian-Russian conference, wrote that his call for a plebiscite in each Ukrainian province would 'provide grounds concerning the extent of his genuine commitment to the ideas of self-determination and independence for Ukraine' (Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, p.338).

Solzhenitsyn replied to the organisers of the Russian-Ukrainian conference with the following:

In my heartfelt perception there is no room for a Russian-Ukrainian conflict and should, heaven forbid, the issue ever come to a head I can safely affirm: under no circumstances and at no time shall I participate in a Russian-Ukrainian clash or allow my sons to do so - whoever the reckless hotheads who would try to drag us into it may be.

(Potichnyj, Raeff, Pelenski and Zekulin 1992, p.334)

Solzhenitsyn died before the 2014 Russian-Ukrainian war and therefore his words were never tested. We will never know if Solzhenitsyn's words were genuine and if he had been alive in 2014 whether he would have supported the annexation of Crimea and Putin's 'New Russia' project.

USSR

Dissident Russian nationalism

Of the 807 imprisoned dissidents in the USSR, Peter Reddaway found only 36 Russian nationalists, half of whom were from the *Vserossiiskii Sotsialno Khristianskii Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia Naroda* (All Russian Social Christian Union for the Liberation of the People - VSKhSON). This was fewer in number than dissidents from the far smaller Moldovan and Latvian populations, largely due to Russian nationalists being accommodated and tolerated by the Soviet regime. Russians did not protest in the same proportion as Ukrainians and non-Russians because their Russian identity and the USSR's great power status appealed to their nationalism while Russian language and culture was never subject to discrimination. Russian nationalists had little to complain about during Putin's rise through the ranks of the KGB when the 'Russian Party' in the Soviet Communist Party ruled the USSR from the mid-1960s to mid-1980s. In Ukraine only half a percent of dissidents and oppositionists were Russian nationalists, far smaller than the nearly ten percent who were Crimean Tatars (Krawchenko 1985, p.251).

Ludmilla Alexeyeva's (1985, pp.431-448) chapter on the 'Russian National Movement' is not included in her book's section on 'The Movements for Self-Determination' which is reserved for Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Armenians, and Georgians. Motyl (1990, p.165) wrote that Russian nationalists were in fact not nationalists but imperialists who preferred unions and empires to an independent nation-state; instead, Russian nationalists called for the USSR to become more 'Russian' than it already was. Rowley (2000, p.36) believes President Yeltsin could be described as the first Russian 'nationalist' because of his backing of an independent Russian state. But, as Chapter 2 discussed, the Russian SFSR never declared independence from the USSR and in early December 1991,

Yeltsin did not push for Russian independence at the Bielaviezskaja Pusca state dacha meeting in Belarus with Kravchuk and Shushkevych.

The concept of national democracy has always been an oxymoron in Russia and its absence in the late 1980s was evident in no Russian political forces seeking independence from the USSR. In the late 1980's, liberals and nationalists did not unite to 'free' Russia from Soviet communism and imperial control because:

Russia, in that it was the heart of the old Soviet Union, was already its own country, the Union its empire. To nationalists, the liberation of Russia from Soviet rule meant the disintegration of that empire and the deterioration of Russia's international position.

(Braumoellwer 1997, p.385)

Russia therefore failed to create a popular front of the type found in the three Baltic republics and Ukraine, despite many attempts to do so, 'due to the inability of liberals and nationalists to agree on a program' (Braumoellwer 1997, p.385). The absence of an alliance between liberals and nationalists in Russia opened the door to high levels of support for great power nationalism (Braumoellwer 1997, p.396).

Bear F. Braumoellwer (1997, p.378) points out:

The struggle for independence in Ukraine, as in most non-Russian republics, during the slow disintegration of the Soviet Union followed this pattern: the desire for national independence was one that appealed to both liberalism and nationalism, and the result was a fusion of the two ideologies. In Russia, on the other hand, liberalism and nationalism have never coexisted peacefully. From the time of Peter the Great, liberalism has been viewed by Russian nationalists as an imported European idea, one that is unsuitable for Russia. The dissolution of the Soviet Union did not bring about the same commonality of purpose between liberalism and nationalism in Russia that it did in other former republics, simply because Russia's independence was never at issue. The main question as the Soviet state disintegrated was not whether Russia would be independent but rather

whether or not the political entities around it would remain part of its territory.

Dissident Russian nationalists were as ignorant and belittling of the nationality question as were White Russian emigres, ROA and NTS. The one exception was the Russian nationalist *samizdat* document *Slovo Natsii* (A Nation Speaks 1971) which devoted more space to the nationalities question than the Democratic Movement of the Soviet Union, and which is discussed later in this chapter (Bilinsky 1977, p.85). An inability to discuss nationality questions in the USSR was also true of Russian Marxist dissidents, such as Roy A. Medvedev (Bilinsky 1977, p.79).

Dissident Russian nationalists, similar to their official nationalist counterparts, believed that the USSR had been formed on the basis of a voluntary unification of nationalities. The Russian nationalist *samizdat* publication *Volnoe Slovo* wrote, 'Russian history was characterised by the voluntary union of the peoples with Russia.' *Volnoe Slovo* denied 'the Russian Empire was maintained by bayonets' believing the Russian Empire was not a prison of peoples, as non-Russian dissidents and non-Russian emigres claimed, but a fraternal union of nations (Yanov 1978, p.71). The Tsarist Russian Empire was allegedly attractive because it offered 'protection' to non-Russians from 'external enemies' and predatory neighbours. Russian nationalists wrote: 'If it can be said that the Russian Empire was maintained by bayonets, this was true only in the sense that Russian bayonets defended the outlands from the claims of cruel neighbours' (Yanov 1978, p.60). Russian nationalist dissidents believed the myths about benevolent Russian and Soviet rule which underpinned Soviet historiography, Eurasianism and Putin's view of Ukrainians and other non-Russian nations of the former USSR.

Dissident Russian nationalism was never as organisationally strong as nationalism in Ukraine, the three Baltic states, and Georgia and Armenia. Non-Russian nationalists were opposed to Soviet and Russian 'Others' while Russian nationalists never viewed the Soviet state as their enemy. Non-Russian nationalists could blame Russia, but dissident and official Russian nationalists could only blame China, Jews, and the West. Michael Urban (1994, p.733) writes that 'Russia does not enjoy this luxury' which

the non-Russians had, and ‘a discourse of identity forfeits from the outset the possibility of constructing some other nation on to which might be loaded the negative moment in the recreation of a national community.’

National democrats in the non-Russian republics combined demands for human rights with those for national rights. Russians had no need to demand national rights as these were fulfilled by the Soviet regime. Non-Russian national democrats fought against the Soviet centre which they defined as Soviet communist, Russian or both. Russian nationalists did not fight against the Soviet centre and were on the whole loyalists. Russian liberals also did not seek independence for their republic; instead supporting the democratisation of the USSR and its transformation into a looser union.

Popular fronts appealed to both liberalism and nationalism and ‘therefore, accommodation between the two was not difficult, and the pro-independence “national fronts” accommodated elements of both’ (Braumoellwer 1997, p.384). Members of these popular fronts eventually split into centre right political parties. Since the early 1990s, Ukraine has always had a vibrant national democratic constituency consisting of *Rukh* and *Ukrayinska Respu-blikanska Partiya* (Ukrainian Republican Party) in the 1990s, *Nasha Ukrayina* (Our Ukraine), Fatherland Party and *Blok Yuliya Tymoshenko* (Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko - BYuT) in the 2000s, and *Blok Petra Poroshenka* (Petro Poroshenko bloc), European Solidarity Party, Arsen Yatsenyuk’s *Narodnyy Front* (National Front - NF), and *Samopomych* (Self-Reliance) after the Euromaidan Revolution.

Dissident Russian nationalism was far weaker than in the non-Russian republics because it possessed important avenues for its expression within the Soviet system. What was permissible for Russians to publish and show on television and radio was far greater than that permitted for Ukrainians and other non-Russians. Ukrainians received far higher sentences than Russian dissidents and many more died in the Gulag; poet dissident Vasyl Stus died in September 1985 - the year Gorbachev became Soviet leader (Suslensky 1983, pp.237-238). The Ukrainian Helsinki Group, the largest of the Helsinki Groups created in five Soviet republics (Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia), was decimated by arrests, exile and deaths in

confinement. Under Andropov, repression of dissent and repression returned ‘to the methods characteristic of the Stalin era’ (Wishnevsky 1983) - especially in Ukraine.

In 1964 one of only a few Russian nationalist organisations, the All-Russian Social Christian Union, was launched by Igor Ogurtsov who was detained and sentenced in 1967. Senior Russian Orthodox Church clergy spoke in his defence. The weakness of organised Russian dissident nationalism delayed the emergence of the next group until 1977, the Christian Committee for the Defence of the Rights of Religious Believers led by Gleb Yakunin. Peter S. J. Duncan (2000, p.67) heralds this as the basis ‘for the development of a Russian national movement outside the control of the Party.’

Dissident Russian nationalists published the *samizdat* publications *Veche* (Council), *Zemlya* (Land), *Moscow Collection* and *From Under the Rubble* providing platforms for a broad range of views ranging from Russian liberal nationalists, Christian nationalists, national-Bolsheviks, fascists and anti-Semites. Religious dissident Osipov edited the ‘patriotic’ (in his words) *samizdat* magazine *Veche* between 1971-1973. *Veche*, as with all Russian nationalist *samizdat*, upheld Soviet historiography’s praise for Tsarist Russian military officers and imperialists (Bilinsky 1977, p.85).

NTS viewed the All-Russian Social Christian Union as its kindred spirit (Yanov 1978, p.22). Both political groups believed communism was the main threat to Christian Civilisation and because the heart of Communism lay in ‘Russia’ (which they typically equated with the USSR) salvation could only come from Russia. *Veche* believed that the rest of the world could not be saved but what must be saved was Russia as a ‘historical nation’ destined to implement its ‘idea’ and mission.

Dissident and official Russian nationalists supported similar policies and the same Soviet historical myths: [1]

attacked Ukrainian ‘bourgeois nationalism’ and ‘international Zionism’ as two ‘anti-national extremes’ representing ‘chauvinism and cosmopolitanism’ (Erlacher 2013, pp.308-318). Jews were portrayed as lacking national roots, prone to criminality and deceptiveness and treacherous allies of Ukrainian nationalists (Erlacher 2013, p.312).

Ostorozhno: sionizm! (Warning: Zionism!) by Yurii Ivanov portrayed Jews as a cosmic evil power bent on the destruction of Russia. *Vtorzhenie bez oruzhiia (Invasion without Arms)* by Vladimir Begun and published by *Molodaya Gvardiia* in 1977 in a mass edition of 150,000 copies, attacked World Zionism. The *samizdat* journal *Veche* published anti-Semitic articles portraying Jews in a similar light as official anti-Zionists as harbingers of chaos.

5 *Generalissimo Stalin:* Admiration, adulation and praise for Stalin who won the Great Patriotic War, built a nuclear superpower and forged an empire in eastern Europe.

6 *Orthodox Fundamentalism:* promotion of the fusion of the Russian Orthodox Church with Leninism and transformation of the Communist Party into an 'Orthodox Party of the Soviet Union.'

7 *Xenophobia*: Hostility to Western democratic values and liberal intellectuals who were castigated as agents of the West. Russia has its own 'special path' and should not import Western democratic values. Russia is destined to have an authoritarian political system.

8 *Eurasian Power*: An imperial idea of Russia as a great power controlling the Eurasian landmass.

9 *China:* Following military skirmishes in 1969 on the Soviet-Chinese border, Russian nationalists viewed China as a threat to its control of Eurasia. This Chinese threat is the only one of the nine factors which is no longer relevant to the post-Soviet era.

The nationalistic *samizdat* manifesto *Slovo Natsii (* A Nation Speaks 1971), signed anonymously by Russian Patriots, preached 'racism, state despotism, and imperialism' (Alexeyeva 1985, p.439); that is, they were not 'patriots' but great power nationalists. Similar to other Russian nationalists, its authors supported the Russian Orthodox Church as a state religion (*de facto* it already was) and a 'great, single and indivisible Russia.' As was common with Russian nationalists, their arguments were full of contradictions. Russian Patriots argued: 'Somehow there has arisen the version - which is being intensively propagated - that the Russians are a privileged people. In

fact, exactly the opposite is the case...' Ukrainians, they point out, unlike Russians, have their own republican Communist Party. Russians never clamoured for a republican communist party until the late Gorbachev era. The slogan of 'Russian Patriots, A Single and- Indivisible Russia,' which harked back to the ROA and NTS, would offer equal rights to non-Russian peoples but at the same time Russians would remain the ruling nation. An environment where some are more equal than others is not only reminiscent of George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* but also of the Russian World and Eurasianism.

Typically, Russian Patriots ridiculed Belarus even more than Ukraine, alleging 'the Belarusian language' is only a 'collection of Western Russian dialects.' Russian Patriots, as with Solzhenitsyn and contemporary Russian nationalists, demanded border changes. A Nation Speaks (1971) claimed that 'the current frontiers of Ukraine did not correspond to its ethnography' and the detachment of south-eastern Ukraine would they surmised (and hoped), mean Ukraine would have no access to the sea or any industrial base. Their hope is surprisingly similar to Putin's actual policies towards the Azov and Black Seas (see Chapter 8).

Russian Patriots believed that following its dismemberment, the smaller in territory Ukraine would plead to Russia to be allowed to 'return as the prodigal son' (A Nation Speaks 1971).[15] Ukraine pleading to return to 'Mother Russia' is a common refrain and the perennial hope of Russian nationalists. Russian Patriots wrote:

Modern Ukraine's borders also do not correspond to the historic ethnographic limits. Seven million Russians and, probably, no less Russianized Ukrainians live in Ukraine, and it would be more appropriate to transfer several Ukrainian *oblasts* to Russia. We are not even talking about the flagrant injustice of giving Crimea to Ukraine, as a result of which an absolute majority of its Russian population is now forced to learn Ukrainian.

A Nation Speaks (1971) reads as though Russian Patriots had looked into a crystal ball and seen the future. As early as 1990-1991, Russian democrats and nationalists challenged Ukraine's borders, saying they would no longer remain guaranteed if the USSR ceased to exist. This claim of Ukraine's

territorial integrity as only recognised if it remained within the Russian sphere of influence has been a perennial theme over the last three decades.

Because of threats of territorial claims from western neighbours, Russian Patriots believed the Ukrainian nationalist goal of independence was unrealistic because the country was hobbled together from regions which really belonged to Russia and Poland. Their view of an 'artificial' Ukraine is a religious mantra of Russian nationalists and Russian political leaders (Putin 2008). In the words of Russian Patriots (A Nation Speaks 1971):

If a question about the independent existence of Ukraine really arose, its boundaries should be revised. In such a case, Ukraine should cede the following territories to Russia: (a) Crimea; (b) Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhya *oblasts* (where the Russian population dominates); and (c) Odesa, Mykolayiv, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, and Sumy *oblasts* (where the population is Russified enough, and which were historically developed by the Russian state). What could the remaining parts, without access to the sea and key industrial regions, hope for? Let Ukrainians think about that. Let them also think about claims that Poles could make to their Western regions where the population is predominantly pro-Polish. The only result could be the return of the prodigal son. Concerning the Ukrainian claims to Kuban and regions of the Central Black Earth *(Chernozemnyj tsentr),* they are wholly laughable and should not bother us, just like other foreign claims to our territories (i.e., the 'Bessarabia' question).

The *samizdat* document A Nation Speaks (1971) is remarkably similar to Putin's (2008) speech to the NATO-Russia Council made nearly four decades later:

In Ukraine, one third are ethnic Russians. Out of forty-five million people, in line with the official census, seventeen million are Russians. There are regions, where only the Russian population lives, for instance, in Crimea. 90 percent are Russians. Generally speaking, Ukraine is a very complicated state. Ukraine, in the form it currently exists, was created in Soviet times, it received its territories from Poland - after the Second World war, from Czechoslovakia, from Romania - and at present not all the problems have been solved as yet in the border region with Romania in the Black Sea.

Then, it received huge territories from Russia in the east and south of the country. It is a complicated state formation.

Official Russian nationalism

Masha Gessen (2017, pp.75, 77) belongs to a very small minority of scholars when she writes the Soviet system ‘had generally subdued outright Russian nationalist voices’ and ‘both the expression and cultivation of a Russian nationalist identity were strongly discouraged.’ This seems at odds with Gessen (2017, pp.77-78) also writing about the Soviet regime portraying Russians as the ‘elder’ brother and ‘first among equals’ and its promotion of the Russian language and culture. Alexander Yanov (1978, p.3) is more typical of scholars when he wrote the existence of Russian nationalism in the USSR ‘is an open secret.’

The Soviet regime promoted various forms of Russian nationalism for 46 of its 69 years; that is, for two-thirds of its existence. These periods included Stalin (1928-1953) whom Stephen Kotkin (2017, p.68) describes as ‘a Russian nationalist in the imperial sense.’ Following a brief interlude under Nikita Khrushchev, Russian nationalism was again supported by the Soviet regime under Soviet leaders Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. These periods of Russian nationalism in the USSR were accompanied by repression of Ukrainian dissent, culture and language: [2]

were repressed and murdered, and the *Holodomor* unleashed on Ukrainian peasants. Soviet nationality policy reverted to Tsarist myths in historiography, non-Russian nationalism was designated as the main threat to Soviet rule (in the 1920s it had been Russian nationalism), Russians were defined as the ‘elder brothers’ and Russian became the language of Soviet power.

2 Russian nationalism became state policy and ‘Russian history, culture, and tradition would become the new force uniting the Soviet peoples’ (Martin 2001, pp.270-272). By the eve of World War II, the Soviet Union ‘was propagating an extraordinary crude essentialist Russian nationalism’ (Martin 2001, p.453). National Bolshevism emerged as the ideology underpinning Stalinism. All of these developments were music to the ears of domestic (official and dissident) and emigre Russian nationalists.

3 *Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko (1964-1985):* Between 1971-1972, the Soviet regime implemented the toughest crackdown in any republic since the death of Stalin through a *pohrom* of Ukrainian dissent, intellectuals and national communists. Brezhnev installed 'Little Russian' Shcherbytskyy (1972-1989) in the Ukrainian SSRwho introduced further political repression, toadyism to the Russian 'elder brother' and Russification. The promotion of the Russian language and Sovietisation of non-Russian peoples grew exponentially following the 1979 all-Union Tashkent conference 'The Russian Language, Language of Friendship and Collaboration among the Peoples of the USSR' (Zaslavsky 1982, pp.102-103). National communist Shelest (1963-1972) was accused of 'national deviation' and exiled to Moscow (Bilinsky 1983). Shcherbytskyy was the Ukrainian leader whom the 'Russian Party' in the Communist Party believed was the right type of person to lead Ukraine. Putin would surely have liked him. Russian nationalists in the USSR hated Khrushchev, Shelest and Gorbachev because they welcomed de-Stalinisation, economic reforms, and more liberal nationalities policies (Tillett 1975).

From the mid-1930s, 'The Soviet past was becoming progressively more Russian and so were the upper echelons of the party and state' (Slezkine 1994, p.443). From then it was 'imperative to advance Russian nationalism' in the USSR in the guise of national Bolshevism. The lesser evil theory of incorporation into the Russian Empire was promoted as more preferable for Ukrainians and other non-Russians than the alternative of other forms of foreign rule (Brandenberger and Dubrovsky 1998, p.878; Brandenberger 2001, p.280). Mikhail Agursky (1987) described national bolshevism in the USSR as the revival of Russian imperialist views of Moscow as 'the Third Rome.' 'The messianic consciousness was present in the "Third Rome" concept and in the Third International' (Duncan 2000, p.55) which degenerated into Russian imperialism (O'Loughlin, Toal, and Kolosov 2017, p.753; Lewis 2020, pp.545-546).

Russian nationalism was integrated into Soviet communism in the second half of the 1930s when a 'state-oriented patriotic ideology' reminiscent of tsarist 'great power' and 'Russocentric traditions' fused into Stalinist national Bolshevism (Brandenberger and Dubrovsky 1998, p.873). Russian great power nationalism was promoted after the victory of the Great

Patriotic War when ‘The Soviet media waxed rhapsodic about the Russians having always been the greatest, wisest, bravest and most virtuous of all nations’ (Yekelchyk 2004, p.88).

White Russian emigres came to awe Stalin, as did many Russians for his ‘resurrecting Russian national power through internal regimentation and external expansion’ (Stephan 1978, p.373). Russian emigres warmed to Stalin’s Russian great power nationalism while his ‘struggle against cosmopolitanism’ tickled their anti-Semitic fancies (Laqueur 1993, p.62). ‘Even an extreme Russian nationalist could not have found fault with Soviet communism in 1950 as far as its patriotic fervour was concerned’ Laqueur (1993, p.63) wrote.

Stalin was the ‘ultimate fascist’ and Russian emigres with similar ideological orientations patterned themselves on him. After all, Stalin murdered more communists than Nazi leader Adolf Hitler. White Russian emigre admirers of Stalin believed in five factors which are always present in Russian nationalism and remain central to Putin’s Russia (Andreyev 1989, pp.175-177):

1 The West is in decline.

2 Russia and Eurasia are always in competition and Eurasianism is a rising centre of world civilisation.

3 Russia needs to be free of Western influences.

4 A messianic belief in Russia pursuing its own unique path and religious destiny (Duncan 2000).

5 ‘Anti-Westernism’ has been the ‘core impulse of this long-standing Russian-Eurasian political culture’ (Kotkin 2017, p.68).

The Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko eras were a return to ‘normality’ for Russian nationalists. This ‘normality’ included five areas which, in different ways, have become important elements of Putin’s regime: [3]

historical monuments, and rehabilitation of Slavophile and White Russian emigre thinkers and writers. The ‘red-white-brown’ coalition came to power in Putin’s Russia.

4 *‘Struggle against Cosmopolitanism’ and Anti-Zionism:* these campaigns under Stalin and Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko were nothing more than camouflaged Anti-Semitism. Russian’s information warfare has revived Black Hundred-style anti-Semitism,[16] draws on Soviet anti-Zionism to attack globalisation and Jewish-Hungarian oligarch George Soros[17] and goes as far as publishing materials praising Hitler.[18] Sergei Glazyev, one of Putin’s senior advisers on Ukraine, propounds conspiratorial anti-Zionism (Anti-Semitism).[19] Russian occupied Crimea and the DNR and LNR propagate Soviet style anti-Zionism against their Jewish minority and Ukrainian leaders, accusing them of hiding their Jewishness (Kuzio 2017b, pp.118-140).[20] Russia also manipulates anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism to attract support among fascists and neo-Nazis in Europe and the USA (see Shekhovtsov 2018).[21]

5 *Ukrainian Nationalism:* any Ukrainian in the USSR could be labelled as a Ukrainian nationalist who preserved his national identity, Ivan Dzyuba (1968) wrote (see Kuzio 2016). Putin has had a long-term ‘obsession’ with Ukraine and a paranoia about Ukrainian nationalism (Zygar 2016, p.85).

‘Russian nationalism is deeply imbedded in the ruling majority groups in the country’ and is ‘the dominant element of the official Soviet system of values, of Soviet culture, and of the required norms and patterns of social behaviour’ (Rakowska-Harmstone 1977, p.22; see also Dunlop 1979, p.27).

Roy A. Medvedev (1975, pp.88-89) observed that:

Russian nationalists have up to now been openly supported in such influential bodies as the Political Department of the army and the Central Committee of the *Komsomol*, where their ideas are used for the purpose of ‘patriotic education’...in other more veiled forms, the Russite movement continues to develop and receive highly influential support.

In the Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko era's - Putin's USSR - official Russian nationalism became a 'substitute state ideology' and 'the ethnic backbone of the Soviet state' (Brudny 1998, pp.115, 57, 102). The nationalism of the 'Great Russians' was never criticised in the Soviet media and 'it is as if the phenomenon did not exist' (Zaslavsky 1982, p.128). The emergence of a 'Russian Party' within the Soviet Communist Party was an outgrowth of Stalin, Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko's inculcation of Russian great power nationalism.

If a Russian Communist Party of the Russian SFSR had existed in the USSR it would have resembled the Serbian Communist Party in its extreme nationalism. Laqueur (1993, p.IX) wrote that 'One should not underate the strong Communist elements in the new Russian right.' The 'Russia Party' had high-level supporters in the Soviet Communist Party because, 'The ideas propagated by the right appealed to the generals and marshals' (Laqueur 1993, p.66). Brudny (1998, p.15) describes the 'Russian Party' in the Soviet Communist Party as the main opposition to Gorbachev and Yeltsin and which became the basis for the 'red-brown' putsch in 1991 and coup d'etat in 1993, respectively. The Russian Communist Party, which was allowed to be created in June 1990, was a leading political force in both coups. If the 1991 hard-line coup d'etat had been successful, Russian nationalism would have returned as the official ideology of the Soviet state and republican rights would have been severely curtailed (Brudny 2000, p. 254).

During the Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko eras, the Soviet Communist Party, the political directorate of the armed forces and the KGB were imbued with national-Bolshevism and chauvinism. The Soviet Union promoted and cultivated public expressions of Russian nationalism, chauvinism, national superiority, the cult of Stalin, and extolling of military victories (Smith 1977, pp.307, 311). Zaslavsky (1982, p.128) writes that this left a lasting legacy in the Russian public and laid the foundations for the future growth of ethnic nationalism in post-Soviet Russia and Putin's militocracy.

Russian dissident Amalrik (1971) divided Russian nationalism during the Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko eras into three components which are

present in the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition:

1 *‘Neo-Stalinist’ (National Bolshevism):* Influential in the Communist Party and government, as well as the Union of Writers and literary journals (Brandenberger and Dubrovsky 1998).

2 *‘Neo-Stalinist Marxism:* Influential in the conservative bureaucracy.

3 *‘Neo-Slavophilism’:* Prevalent among official Russian village writers and dissidents.

Official Russian nationalist books were published in mass editions of up to one million copies and promoted by the propaganda and cultural departments of the Soviet Communist Party. By the late 1960s, official Russian nationalists had aligned with ‘National-Stalinists’ in *Molodaya Gvardiya* (Young Guard), the central publishing organ of the Soviet *Komsomol* (Communist Youth League). Their enemies were ‘unpatriotic’ and ‘anti-Communist’ liberal intellectuals ensconced in the journal *Novyj Mir* (New World). Russian nationalist rehabilitation of Stalin in Putin’s Russia had been promoted decades earlier in the Soviet Russian journals *Molodaya Gvardiya*, *Nash Sovremennik* (Our Contemporary), *Moskva* (Moscow), *Ogonek*, *Neva*, *Don*, and *Volga* and the newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossiia*.

These Soviet ‘thick’ journals promoted Stalin’s rehabilitation through seven arguments that are to be found in the cult of Stalin in Putin’s Russia (Kuzio 2017a):

1 *Pesky Kulaks*: Stalin’s ‘purges’ were not so bad and some of these were justified against the *kulaks.*

2 *Diminished Responsibility:* Stalin was not responsible for the ‘purges,’ they were the responsibility of his entourage and bureaucracy.

3 *It was Not as bad as They All Claim:* Crimes committed under Stalin were not as extensive as claimed.

4 *Why Bring Up the Past?:* De-Stalinisation and work exposing Stalin's crimes in the Khrushchev and Gorbachev eras were condemned.

5 *It Wasn't All Bad:* There was progress under Stalin in industry, urbanisation and Russian literature and culture.

6 *Internal Xenophobia:* Extreme hostility to internal 'traitors' such as *Novy Mir*'s intellectual supporters and pro-Western liberals as agents of the West.

7 *External Xenophobia:* Stalin prevented the imposition of alien Western values in Russia which would have undermined and destroyed Russia from within (Brandenberger and Dubrovsky 1998, p.875).

Moskva, Nash Sovremennik and *Molodaya Gvardiya* had a combined mass circulation of 1.3 million. Readers of these journals and ideologically similar books and viewers of serialised television shows, theatre and cinema reached an audience in the millions and represented a major Russian nationalist constituency in Soviet society (Wishnevsky 1988; Brudny 2000, p.57; Duncan 2000, p.75). Until the mid-1980s, the Soviet Communist Party sided with Russian nationalist journals against *Novy Mir* because it viewed liberals as more alien and potentially dangerous (Laqueur 1993, p.95). High-level support given to official Russian nationalism was evident when the editor of *Novy Mir* was removed after publishing 'an Orthodox Marxist article defending the purity of the ideological vestment of the party' (Yanov 1978, p.50). The *Novy Mir* article accused *Nash Sovremnik* of promoting 'Slavophilie messianism' and 'the superiority of the Russian nation' which they believed was 'incompatible with proletarian internationalism' (Yanov 1978, p.48).

Novy Mir's (no.4, 1969) criticism of Russian chauvinism was similar to that by Ivan Dzyuba (1968) in his report *Internationalism or Russification?* written at the same time and which also accused Russian nationalists of promoting chauvinism through the Soviet Communist Party camouflaged as 'internationalism.' *Novy Mir* was accused of 'Cosmopolitanism' (a euphemism for the West and Jewry) by Old Guard Stalinists and a younger generation of supporters in *Molodaya Gvardiya.* Dzyuba was repressed after Shelest's removal as Ukrainian Communist Party leader in the 1972

‘*pohrom*.' Russian liberals and Ukrainian national communists only received state support after 1985 when Gorbachev became Soviet leader.

The *Vserossiiskoe obshhestvo ohrany pamiatnikov istorii i kultury* (AllRussian Society for the Protection of Historical Monuments - VOOPIK) established in 1965, and the *Otechestvo* (Fatherland) society were supported by the ‘Russian Party’ in the Soviet Communist Party (Clover 2016, p.119).

With a membership of 12.5 million, VOOPIK was hostile towards alien and foreign influences on Russia and the USSR, xenophobically anti-Western, and extremely critical of ‘cosmopolitanism’ (i.e., Jewry).

Interest in old Russian Church music was linked to a belief Muscovy prior to Peter the Great had possessed a spiritual strength and unity which was lacking in the Soviet Union under Brezhnev. *Rodina* clubs were created by the *Komsomol* from the mid-1960s to study pre-revolutionary Russia as an antidote to Western culture (Smith 1977, pp.506-532). The living connection between old Russia and the present was to be found in the countryside. *Derevenshchiki* (Ruralist) writers glorified the Russian countryside and lamented the stagnation of the peasantry and decay of village communities where it was believed the inspiration for a Russian spiritual revival awaited discovery. This movement was also echoed in books on architecture, iconography, folk art, handicrafts and historical studies of medieval Russia. Only Russian writers and historians received official permission to study the history of Kyiv Rus which reinforced Russian nationalist ownership over ‘Kievan Russia’ as the birthplace of the ‘first Russian state.’ Russian religious journals were allowed a measure of freedom, particularly *Zhumal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate).

Late Soviet and post-Soviet eras

VOOPIK and *Otechestvo* were created only a year after Brezhnev came to power and at the same time as the launch of the cult of the Great Patriotic War. The mobilisation of millions of Russians in nationalist activities under the overall banner of ‘Soviet patriotism,’ in which Putin most likely participated as a youngster, planted the seeds for the growth of Russian nationalism in the post-Soviet era. Lev Kopelev, a colleague of Roy

Medvedev's in his critique of Solzhenitsyn's open letter to Soviet leaders, warned that VOOPIK had 'become in essence a legal association of new Black Hundreds' (Dunlop 1979, p.27).

During the 1980s the Soviet media published letters from neo-Nazis and analyses of the activities of neo-Nazi groups. Dugin joined one of these Soviet Russian neo-Nazi groups in the early 1980s active in economically depressed working-class districts of central Russia and western Siberia. In April 1982, on Hitler's birthday, neo-Nazis were never arrested for holding a protest in Pushkin square in Moscow. Neo-Nazi and fascist activists were never detained or politically repressed in Soviet Russia (Wishnevsky 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1987a, 1987b).

Decades of official support for Russian nationalism from the 'Russian Party' in the Communist Party, the KGB and the military provided the ideological roots for the creation of official nationalistic organisations in Gorbachev's USSR. In 1987, the fascist organisation *Pamiat* took control of VOOPIK. Decades of Soviet official campaigns against 'cosmopolitanism' and anti-Zionism had deepened anti-Semitic roots in Russian nationalism.

Pamiat declared its loyalty to Soviet leader Lenin but believed his entourage was dominated by Jews and Masons (Wishnevsky 1987b).

Julia Wishnevsky (1987b) wrote that *Otechestvo* was *Pamiat's* antecedent. It is clear that, 'if the campaign to preserve historical monuments is the bright side of the culturalist movement, groups such as *Rodina* and *Rossiia*, whose views are ultra-conservative and include thinly veiled anti-Semitism, are the darker side' (Bird 1973, p.20). Speaking about *Pamiat,* Aleksandr Yakovlev credited the KGB with having given birth to Russian fascism (Clover 2016, p.165). *Pamiat* received support from senior ranking Communist Party leaders, the KGB and military officers for a political force which could counter the liberal opposition (Laqueur 1993, p.213). *Pamiat* is described by Clover (2016, pp.162-163) as a 'crypto-fascist street gang' which became the 'boot camp' for the 'brown' wing of Russian politics led by a new generation of Russian nationalists and neo-Nazis. Dugin and Barkashov began their political activism in *Pamiat.*

The USSR and post-Soviet Russia established loyal nationalist groups who would take votes from bona fide nationalists and the KPRF. Vladimir Zhirinovsky's misnamed *Liberalno-demokraticheskaya partiya Rossii* (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia - LDPR) was created by the Soviet authorities under Gorbachev as the *Liberalno-demokraticheskaya Partiya sovetskogo Soyuza* (Liberal Democratic Party of the Soviet Union - LDPSS) to provide an image of a 'multi-party' Soviet Union. The LDPSS and LDPR have always functioned as loyal nationalist supporters of the Soviet and Russian authorities.[22] Zhirinovsky's father had been a KGB officer and as a former KGB officer himself, Putin would have been keenly aware as to how loyal nationalist political forces were created. In the 2003 elections, only three years into Putin's first presidential term, the *Vserossiyskaia politicheskaia partiia 'Rodina'* (National Patriotic Union 'Motherland') Party was launched after the unification of 30 nationalist groups. Dugin was commissioned by the authorities to write the 2003 election programme for the Motherland Party which propagated ethnic racism, anti-Semitism, Eurasianist expansionism and Russian Orthodox jihad against Georgia and Ukraine. The authorities used the Motherland Party to take votes from the KPRF. The Motherland Party brought together a motley collection of unsavoury *siloviki*, coup plotters, invaders of Afghanistan, and national Bolsheviks. Motherland Party leaders included Dmitry Rogozin, a former leader of *Kongress russkikh obschin* (Congress of Russian Communities - KRO), Glazyev, Sergey Baburin, Soviet and Russian army General Valentin Varennikov, one of the planners and leaders of the Afghan-Soviet war and instigators of the 1991 coup d'etat, and Georgy Shpak, former commander of Russian airborne troops. The neo-Nazi RNE (Clover 2016, p.271) and KRO, which had campaigned since the early 1990s for a more active Russian intervention in defence of compatriots, saw the Motherland Party as their kindred spirit. In 2006, the authorities created the Just Russia Party as a left-wing, loyal party. Many viewed Just Russia as the national Bolshevik successor to the Motherland Party. In 2021, the Just Russia Party merged with *Za pravdu* (For Truth), led by a veteran of the Donbas war and writer Zakhar Prilepin, and *Patrioty Rossii* (Patriots of Russia) Party to create *Spravedlivaya Ros-siya-Patrioty - Za pravdu* (Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth) Party. Prilepin was an example of how neo-Nazis (see Chapter 8) moved with ease from ostensibly extreme right 'opposition' political forces, such as the National Bolshevik Party of which he was a member from 1996

to 2019, to loyal nationalist parties, such as Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth. To take control of skinhead nationalists, *Russkii Obraz* (Russian Image) and its paramilitary BORN (Militant Organisation of Russian Nationalists) were created by the authorities. The Russian independent newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* wrote that *Russkii Obraz* 'was long considered virtually a "Kremlin project" launched as part of the "managed nationalism" programme' (Coynash 2015).

Dugin has been described as the 'St. Cyril and Methodius of (Russian) fascism' (Clover 2016, p.174). The influence of his past association with Soviet Nazi groups and *Pamiat* are to be found in Dugin's *The Foundation of Politics* and *Chetvertaia Politicheskaia Teoriia* (*The Fourth Political Theory*) published in 1997 and 2009, respectively. Dugin's Eurasianism incorporated themes from Soviet Communism, Nazism, traditionalism and environmental concerns with the ideas promoted by rural writers in the Brezhnev era through the integration of White Russian emigre Eurasianism and Stalinist national-Bolshevism into a great power and imperialistic ideology. Writing in the early 1990s, Laqueur (1993, p.146) under-estimated Eurasianism as a 'nebulous idea from both a cultural and political point of view.' Dugin's racist belief in Russians as the 'chosen people' and 'Aryan race' drew on Nazi writings (Zubrin 2014). Dugin has been consistent in his extreme opposition to Ukraine's existence as an independent state, and his support for its dismemberment and the incorporation of Crimea and 'New Russia' into Russia. Dugin's fingerprints were all over the so-called 'Russian Spring' in Ukraine in 2014.

[1]

Orthodoxy-Autocracy-Nationality: A pan-Russian nation consisting of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians.[14]

2 *A unified and indivisible Russia:* Dissident and official Russian nationalists ignored, belittled or blamed Western conspiracies for nationality problems in the USSR.

3 *Russi*f*ication*: Assimilation into Russian culture and language was a positive development for the non-Russian nationalities in the Tsarist Russian Empire and USSR.

4 *Anti-Semitism*: Anti-Zionist books published in the USSR were blatantly anti-Semitic (Kuzio 2017b, pp.118-140). The Soviet regime's propaganda

2

Stalin (1934-1953): From the late 1920s to 1933, Ukrainianisation (indigenisation) was halted, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was closed, Ukrainian intellectuals and national communists

3

De-Stalinisation was ended: Under Putin there has been a cult of Stalin's achievements and a downplaying of his murderous crimes.

2 *The Great Patriotic War:* In 1964, the Soviet regime introduced a cult of the Great Patriotic War which became a more important anniversary than the Bolshevik Revolution. The cult of the Great Patriotic War and official Russian nationalism came to legitimise the Soviet state at a time of a declining belief in Marxism-Leninism (Brudny 1998, pp.58-60). The cult of the Great Patriotic War is central to Putin's regime and is used to justify military aggression against contemporary 'fascists' in Ukraine.

3 *Official Russian Nationalism:* tolerated in literary journals, village prose, electronic media, theatre, defence of the environment, preservation of

Conclusions

Russian and Ukrainian emigres were very different. The former sought to refashion the Soviet Union into a new union and empire and were indifferent to the national question while the latter's goal was to fight for an independent state. Russian emigres were dominated by great power nationalists, imperialists and chauvinists while Ukrainian emigres exhibited political pluralism ranging from communists, centrist liberals, and national democrats to radical nationalists. Polish emigres who had abandoned their imperialistic civilising mission in the east and moderate Ukrainians developed a process of reconciliation throughout the Cold War which led to a breakthrough in relations between both countries, in particular after Solidarity came to power in Poland in 1989.

In the USSR, Russia's national Bolsheviks, and official and dissident nationalists felt at home with conservative Communist leaders while Ukraine's national communists and dissidents welcomed liberalisers. Official and dissident Russian nationalists in the USSR held the same views on maintaining a union and empire rather than building an independent nation-state, the central role of Orthodoxy in Russian culture and civilisation, xenophobic views of Western values and opposition to them influencing Russia, and a preference for authoritarianism over democracy. Importantly for discussions in this book, dissident and official Russian nationalism *both* denied the existence of Ukraine and a Ukrainian nation. The legacy of official nationalism in the USSR is evident in Putin's militocracy built on the Soviet *siloviki* who had espoused national Bolshevism and great power nationalism.

Notes

1 Point 8 'Guarantee of national freedom,' https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/CMe ^eHCKafl_fleK^apa^0fl and Point 1, 'The equality of all peoples of Russia and a real right for national development, self-determination, self-rule, and government independence,' https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Prague_Manifesto.

2 Issue nos. 3 (autumn 1985) and 4 (spring 1986) of *Vidnova* dealt with Ukrainian-Polish relations and Ukraine and the Polish opposition.

3 Lyubov Krupnyk, 'Yedynny front,' *Ukrayinskyy Tyzhden*, 26 August 2019. https:// tyzhden.ua/History/234238.

4 http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n50019833.

5 https://litopysupa.com/books/peter-j-potichnyj-my-journey-part-i.

6 http://www.tydzien.co.uk.

7 https://kulturaparyska.com/pl/index.

8 'CIA Position Paper for Ukrainian Discussion with SIS in London, 23-25 April 1951,' https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL .%209%20%20(DEVELOPMENT%20AND%20PLANS)_0039.pdf.

9 Trotsky had called for an independent Soviet Ukraine in a 1939 pamphlet: https:// www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1939/07/ukraine.htm.

10 UHVR was established in 1944 by the Bandera wing of OUN in Ukraine who sent representatives abroad (zpUHVR) to seek Western support for Ukraine's national liberation struggle.

11 https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/AERODYNAMIC%20%20%20VOL.%202 8%20%20(OPERATIONS)_0065.pdf.

12 OUNz split from the Bandera wing of OUN in 1954 over the latter's unwillingness to accept the democratisation of OUN at its third congress in 1943. zpUHVR had earlier split from the Bandera wing of OUN in 1948.

13 Issue no.2 of *Vidnova* (spring 1985) was entitled 'To Problems of Ukrainian-Russian Relations.'

14 *A Chronicle of Human Rights in the USSR*, no.16, New York: Khronika Press, 1975.

15 *Arkhiv Samizdata*, AS NO. 590 (1970).

16 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/russia-is-the-main-target-of-the-jewish-masonic-globalist-forces-who-are-behind-the-war; https://euvsdisinfo.eu/russian-state-tv-promotes-th e-rotschild-conspiracy-theory; https://euvsdisinfo.eu/antisemitism-and-pro-kremli n-propaganda; https://euvsdisinfo.eu/november-surprise-an-anti-semitic-anniversa ry; https://www.rferl.org/a/putins-minorities-comment-triggers-us-backlash/29094 490.html; and https://euvsdisinfo.eu/sexism-racism-and-anti-semitism-in-russian-m edia.

17 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-judges-of-the-echr-are-affiliated-with-soros; http s://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/zionists-control-the-political-and-military-leadership-of-t

he-united-states; https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-great-reset-a-global-plan-by-the-

secret-elites-seeks-to-subjugate-humanity;https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-eu-allo

ws-george-soros-to-intervene-in-the-internal-affairs-of-the-european-countries; https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/soros-foundation-took-an-active-part-in-rose-orange-and-

velvet-revolutions; and https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/soros-controls-the-current-p

olitical-elite-of-ukraine-and-most-likely-plays-an-important-role-with-his-money-

in-the-events-in-belarus.

18 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/pro-kremlin-news-front-praising-hitler.

19 https://glazev.ru/articles/153-geopolitika/67422-okkupatsija.

20 http://khpg.org/en/1393641069; http://khpg.org/en/1397783108; and http://khpg.or g/n/1397936989.

21 https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-pro-putin-trolls-court-u-s-alt-right-wi h-hardcore-anti-semitism-1.5770080.

22 'Russia Hews Closer to Zhirinovsky's Wacky Vision Than You Might Have Expected,' *RFERL,* 25 April 2016. http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-zhir inovsky-no-longer-so-wacky/27696519.html.

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4 Boris Yeltsin

Liberalism, tanks, and unions

We cannot get it out of our system that Ukrainians are the same as we are. That is our destiny. Our common destiny. It is in our hearts that Ukrainians are our own people. Our identities are inseparable.

President Boris Yeltsin, 1997.[1]

In the 1970s, a pioneering study of Russian nationalism in the USSR by Yanov (1978, pp.8-9) foresaw that the disintegration of the USSR would not lead to the spread of democracy in Russia but the rise of nationalism. In the same decade, American *New York Times* journalist Hedrick Smith (1977, pp.327, 330-335) based in Moscow found a growing nostalgia for Stalin and 'the feeling that someone above them is firmly in charge.' Smith (1977, p.334) pointed out 'Russians prize order and security as much as Americans prize freedom.' As Ostp Kushnir (2018) explains, and Chapter 2 analyses, these tenets of Russian authoritarian political culture showed to what degree Russia is very different to Ukraine. Obsession with the Ukrainian question has been a major obstacle to Russia becoming a post-imperial country by hindering the democratisation of Russian identity into a civic, post-imperial variant. Russian scholar Igor Gretskiy writes: 'Thus, in the post-Soviet era, Russian society entered with past-oriented views and stable anti-Western sentiments.'[2] Gretskiy pointed out that 'In July 1992, 69 percent of Russians believed Russia should preserve itself as a great power, even if it worsened its relations with the outside world. This is a clear sign of a post-imperial syndrome.'[3] Such views meant 'psychologically, if not yet politically, the climate was ripe for national-patriots and neo-communists offering dreams of a restoration of the Soviet empire' (Kliamkin 1994, p.112). Already in the first year of Russian independence, liberalism was on the defensive and under severe competition from great power nationalism. Russians were rebelling against the concept of the Russian Federation as their smaller 'imagined community.'

Russian nationalists believed Russia's borders with former Soviet republics were not permanent and could be changed peacefully after referendums or by force, as in 2014. For Russian nationalists the borders of the Russian Federation were an 'off-spring of Bolshevik experiments' and an 'unnatural formation,' according to Sergei Burbulis. Vice President Aleksander Rutskoi refused to equate the borders of 'Russia' with those of the Russian Federation. Sergei Karaganov, head of the semi-official Council on Foreign and Defence Policy, believed that the former USSR was entering a period of conflicts: 'In this process some of them will disintegrate, some may even be swallowed by others, and certain countries may possibly be reintegrated into a new community.'[4]

In February 1992, two months after the disintegration of the USSR, surveys by the Moscow-based Public Opinion Foundation found that Russians could not accept Ukrainian independence, Ukraine was no longer part of 'Russia' (i.e., the USSR) and Ukrainians and Russians were now politically equal. Three-quarters of Russians wanted a union with Ukraine and Belarus and nearly half (49 percent) supported Russia and Ukraine constituting one state (Laba 1995, p.477). Two further opinion polls found nearly two-thirds (64 percent) supporting a Russian-Ukrainian union[5] and over four-fifths (81.2 percent) of Russians believing Russia and Ukraine should unite (Simonsen 2000, p.309). These early opinion polls showed how an independent Ukraine was incomprehensible to most Russians.

Russians could not fathom Ukrainians as 'foreigners' and not in as close a relationship with Russia as they had with Belarus. For Russians it was inconceivable to live without Ukraine and Belarus because, as Mary McAuley (1997, p.34) wrote: 'That idea defied the imagination, both politically and conceptually.' Roman Laba (1995, p.477) found that mass Russian political attitudes and myths did not 'accept the existence of a Ukrainian state or nation.' Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Yuri Dubynin said 'Naturally, Ukraine is not an overseas state for us. It seems not enough to say that the Ukrainians are a very close nation to us. It is a kin and brotherly nation.'[6] Commander of Russia's Federal Border Service General Andrei Nikolayev believed the border between Russia and Ukraine is 'in fact a border between one nation but two independent states,'[7] a view held by Russian political leaders (see Chapter 5), the Russian World and senior

clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church (see Chapter 7). Such views explained why it took Yeltsin so long to sign a border treaty, despite the election of Kuchma in 1994 on a moderate pro-Russian platform, and Russia's disinterest in demarcating and delimiting their border. Dubynin explained the closeness of Russians and Ukrainians as a product of the fact 'the history of my country begins namely here!'; that is, he understood 'Kievan Russia' (in Ukraine) as the site of the 'first Russian state.' Russia's expropriation of Ukrainian history, especially Kyiv Rus, as 'ancient Russian land' leads to Ukraine being viewed as a part of the pan-Russian nation.

The roots of the 2014 crisis lie in Russia's inability to forge a post-imperial identity in the first half of the 1990s. Russian nationalist policies towards Ukraine were already evident in 1993-1994 under Yeltsin and especially during the 1994-1996 transition to support of the Russian-Belarusian Union, Yevgenny Primakov's Eurasianist foreign policy (see below) and return of the Chekist old guard. Gretskiy writes:

But after the enchanting victory of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Kremlin began to take over the anti-Western slogans of this party much more actively and include them in its official discourse. Immediately after the elections, in January 1994, at a meeting with ambassadors, (Foreign Minister Andrei) Kozyrev gave instructions to make the protection of compatriots in the republics of the former USSR and the preservation of the Russian military presence there as a strategic priority of foreign policy.[8]

In July 1994, Kuchma was elected in opposition to 'nationalist' Kravchuk and with the belief that, as an eastern Ukrainian, he could improve relations with Russia. This was not to be, and it took Yeltsin three years to finally visit Ukraine and sign a treaty recognising Ukraine's border and another two years for both houses of the Russian parliament to ratify it. In other words, 'normalising' Russian-Ukrainian relations took the entire first term of Kuchma's presidency (1994-1999). In 2019, a quarter of a century later, Zelenskyy, from the same Dnipropetrovsk *oblast* as Kuchma, also believed he could be more successful than 'nationalist' Poroshenko in search of a Donbas peace agreement, but he too proved to be unsuccessful in 'normalising' relations.

There has obviously been a consistent problem for Russia over the last three decades in dealing with an independent Ukraine. Kyiv would continue to have poor relations with Russia if Ukrainian presidents did not pursue the eastern Slavic identity policies implemented in Lukashenka's Belarus. Ukrainian leaders who did not emulate Belarus are designated as 'nationalists' - irrespective of whether they are Ukrainian or Russian speakers and irrespective of whether they are from western or eastern Ukraine.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first analyses the impact of the Soviet legacy on developments in Russian nationalism and the concept of compatriots in the Russian Federation. The second discusses how compatriots are used by Russian nationalists and policymakers and how this impacted Russia's relations with Ukraine, home to the largest number of Russian speakers in the former USSR outside the Russian Federation. The third analyses how Russian state institutions became dominated by Russian great power nationalism and a source of irredentism and imperialism towards Ukraine. The fourth discusses why liberalism proved to be weak in Russia and unable to halt the transition towards great power nationalism in 1994-1996. The fifth investigates the 'red-brown' coalition behind the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d'etat as the kernels from which emerged the 'red-white-brown' coalition under Putin.

The Soviet legacy and post-Soviet Russia

The Russian Federation did not begin from a clean slate but rather expropriated Soviet institutions. The Russian Federation undertook top-down state building after inheriting Soviet institutions in Moscow, such as the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and Defence (including the General Staff and military training colleges) and the KGB (Porter 1992). A December 1991 decree made the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the successor to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 'Understandably, the old problems and the old ways could not be so abruptly decreed away' (Crow 1993a).

The Soviet legacy did not just transfer buildings and personnel to the Russian Federation; it also provided concepts, ways of thinking,

stereotypes, and xenophobia. The Russian federal government ‘consisted of large, cumbersome institutions, whose officials were accustomed to thinking in Union terms of obeying party orders’ (McAuley 1997, p.38). Soviet rules and norms became Russian in the 1990s and since and Russian history and the Soviet legacy had greater influence than Gorbachev’s ‘new thinking’ on the path taken by the Russian Federation (Skak 1996, p.140). Russia’s Soviet inheritance had ramifications in two major areas.

Firstly, the capture of power in Russia by *Chekists* [9] Primakov and Putin from the SVR and the FSB, respectively, who established a militocracy (Kryshtanovskaya and White 2003; Skak 2016). As defenders of the Soviet and Russian states, *Chekists* had always been Russian great power nationalists (see Chapter 2). In the post-Soviet era, *Chekist* national Bolshevism evolved into Eurasianism. Soviet era *Chekists* and their post-Soviet successors were - and remained - Russian chauvinists towards Ukraine and Ukrainians.

Secondly, Russian elites adopted the attitudes and views of Soviet elites towards the former Soviet republics (Wallander 1996, pp.207-218). Soviet officials who became Russian officials transferred their arrogant Soviet methods of dealing with republican leaders to relating with disrespect and disdain to presidents of post-Soviet independent states. The Russian Federation believed only it, alongside China and the USA, were genuine sovereign countries with their own histories, cultures, identities, economies, and militaries who are able to assert independent national interests (Hill and Gaddy 2015, pp.317-318). The 14 non-Russian Soviet republics, particularly ‘artificial’ states such as Ukraine, were never considered to hold sovereignty.

The 2014 crisis was a clash of sovereignties where Russia was at odds with the UN and international law in not viewing Ukraine (and other former Soviet republics) as ‘sovereign’ entities. Promoting Russia as the first among equals and seeking the primacy of its own interests in Eurasia, Russian elites have been in ‘pursuit of suzerainty’ (Merry 2016, p.30) whereby a great power exercises control over the external relations of its neighbours while allowing internal autonomy to a local satrap. The client state recognises the external suzerain while receiving protection and aid, as

in the Belarusian relationship with Russia. The 2014 crisis was caused by ‘much of the Russian elite being incapable of thinking about Ukraine other than as a suzerain client’ (Merry 2016, pp.37-38). Ukraine, in Russia’s eyes, should be ‘a more reliable satrap’ in the manner of Belarus (Wilson 2011, p.259).

As we have seen, Russia not seeing itself as the ‘elder brother’ of non-Russians lasted barely two years because the chauvinistic complex has deep roots in Russian identity. Russians were lauded by Soviet nationalities policies and Soviet historiography as the ‘elder brother’ from the mid-1930s to the appointment of Gorbachev; that is, for half a century of Soviet rule. Bruce D. Porter (1996, p.124) writes:

Those myths helped shape the self-image of the Russian people as a great nation with a unique and special mission, a self-image that in turn contributed to the rise of the xenophobic nationalism that characterized so much of Russian thinking.

The ‘superiority’ of the Russian language is deeply ingrained in Russian national identity (Barner-Barry and Hody 1995, p.113-136; Edenborg 2017, p.298) which runs parallel with the demeaning of the Ukrainian and Belarusian languages. Russian television programmes use humour to mock Ukraine and Ukrainians in a manner ‘typical in colonizer-colonized relationships’ (Minchenia, Tornquist-Plewa and Yurchuk 2018, p.225). Russia and Russians are cast as superior, modern and advanced while Ukraine and Ukrainians are depicted as backward, uneducated ‘or at least unsophisticated, lazy, unreliable, cunning, and prone to thievery’ (Minchenia, Tornquist-Plewa and Yurchuk 2018, p.225).

Sergei Stankevych and Karaganov rejected accusations the promotion of CIS integration and Russia’s role in the CIS was ‘imperialist’: ‘On the contrary, it is for Russia a legitimate and national aspiration to erase conflict and harmonise relations on the territory of the former USSR.’ This was an early example of Russian fake news; since the late 1980s and early 1990s, Soviet and Russian hybrid warfare has not erased but manufactured wars and created frozen conflicts. It was Russia’s historical task, Stankevych claimed, to stabilise itself within its own borders and then undertake a gradual ‘economic and cultural expansion’ into the CIS which would lead

to the reunification of the Soviet republics (he excluded the three Baltic states).[10]

From 1994, Russia's revised foreign policy towards the CIS, dubbed Russia's 'Monroe Doctrine' and supported by centrists, conservatives and nationalists, promoted a more coordinated and assertive security policy toward the 'Near Abroad.'[11] Russia's revised foreign policy was also described as the 'Karaganov Doctrine' following the publication of 'A Strategy for Russia' by the Council for Foreign and Defence Policy.[12] The 'Monroe (Karaganov) Doctrine' set out Russia's foreign policies to confront the rise in 'aggressive' (i.e., non-Russian) nationalism, ethnic minority separatism, economic crisis and nuclear proliferation. They proposed to the UN the utilisation of CIS structures to manage peacekeeping operations in Eurasia. The policy ignored the fact it was Russia fanning separatism in Azerbaijan (through Armenian proxies), Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. Russia believed it was its responsibility to ensure security and stability in the geopolitical space of the former USSR (Crow 1993b);[13] that is, blocking UN and other international organisations from carrying out peacekeeping operations in what the Kremlin viewed as its exclusive sphere of influence. The Ukrainian authorities viewed Russia's revised foreign policy as a potential security threat because the Crimea separatist question continued to ferment, and Russia was dragging out the signing and ratification of a treaty recognising Ukraine's borders. Russia's blockage of UN peacekeeping forces from operating in Eurasia has remained consistent for three decades, including in the on-going war in the Donbas.

The Russian Federation sought legitimacy from its imperial and Soviet pasts as a 'great power' and nuclear successor to the USSR; this legitimacy could not be obtained by building a post-imperial identity based on the Russian history of Novgorod, Vladimir-Suzdal and Muscovy and an 'imagined community' confined to the Russian Federation. Choosing to build a Russian identity using Tsarist imperial and Soviet history reinforced chauvinistic views of Ukraine and Russian myths about Crimea and the port of Sevastopol (Plokhy 2000). A new Russian identity in the 1990s would have required, 'the deconstruction of the symbiosis between Russian and Soviet imperial identity' (Beissinger 1992, p. 150). Yeltsin never implemented this deconstruction, leaving the field open for Putin to

integrate Tsarist imperial, White Russian emigre and Soviet great power nationalisms (Verkhovskii and Pain 2012, p.78). Early into his presidency Yeltsin discontinued the building of a post-imperial Russian nation-state and thereby did not follow in the footsteps of Ataturk's construction of a Turkish nation-state from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire (see Tolz 2001).

Compatriots

Scholarly research conducted in the 1990s believed Russian speakers in newly independent states would act in the same manner as Serbs living outside Serbia in the former Yugoslavia; that is, they would rebel leading to conflict. Loshkariov and Sushentsov (2018) continue to propagate this discredited notion of a 'Russian diaspora' more recently, using it to repeat the Kremlin's discourse of a 'civil war' in eastern Ukraine.

Rogers Brubaker (1996) developed a triadic framework between a 'nationalising' state, a Russian-speaking minority on its territory and the Russian state supporting them as its ethnic 'kin'. Brubaker (1996) argued that Russians and Russian speakers would rebel or emigrate rather than assimilate. David Laitin (1998) predicted that Russian speakers in Ukraine would refuse to assimilate and, as the title of his book implied, were 'an identity in formation.'

Such scholarly studies predicted a dark future for countries such as Ukraine. But this was not to be because Brubaker's (1996) and Laitin's (1998) theoretical frameworks failed to provide an indication of future developments and were premised on a lack of understanding of Russianspeaking identities in Ukraine and other non-Russian republics. Their frameworks were shown to be without empirical foundation in the 2014 crisis when Putin's 'New Russia' project failed to win support from the majority of Ukraine's Russian speakers (Kuzio 2019). Weak support for the Russian World in south-eastern Ukraine will continue as conflict and war have always speeded up the crystallisation of national identities (Tilly 2003; Smith 1981; Kalyvas 2006; Kuzio 2020, pp.133-150). Putin's annexation of Crimea and hybrid warfare in the Donbas created a new dynamic between Russia and Ukraine which, contrary to Brubaker (1996)

and Laitin's (1998) predictions, mobilised Ukrainian patriotism and ethnic nationalism among Russian speakers (Kuzio 2020, pp.107-109).

Russians and Russian speakers in Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Estonia and Latvia did not follow Serbs in Yugoslavia by rebelling (Kuzio 2007). Most post-Soviet conflicts were ethnically driven, as in Russia (Chechnya), Georgia (South Ossetia, Abkhazia) and Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh). The one exception was the Transnistria region of Moldova which experienced a similar civilisation conflict to that in Ukraine's Donbas. At the same time, in both Moldova and Ukraine, far more Russians and Russian speakers supported their central governments than supported Russian proxies in Transnistria and the Donbas, respectively (Kuzio 2020, pp.109-111). This suggests that contrary to Brubaker (1996) and Laitin (1998), language was not the driving force in either conflict but identity; specifically, a Moldovan and Ukrainian civic identity which included Russian-speakers against an allegiance to a larger Russian-centred civilisation imagined as the former USSR, Eurasia or the Russian World. We again return to the central question of whether the 'imagined community' is the former Soviet republic (Ukraine) or something larger (Russia)?

The definition of Russians outside the Russian Federation as a 'diaspora' was a misnomer as their allegiance was to the former USSR, not to the Russian SFSR or the Russian Federation. The last Soviet census in 1989 found there to be 24.8 million 'Russians' living outside the Russian SFSR, half of whom were in Ukraine. Those who classified themselves as 'Russians' in the 1989 Soviet census were not necessarily ethnic Russians because of the conflation of Soviet and Russian identities, a large number had declared themselves to be 'Russians' for career advancement and because they were in mixed marriages (with one partner Russian). In Ukraine, for example, 30 percent of marriages in the Soviet era were mixed, especially in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Kuchma declared himself in official documents as 'Russian' in 1990 and Ukrainian in 1992.

A US Census Bureau paper by Stephen Rapawy (1997) pointed to the increasing number of those who identified themselves as 'Russian' in the 1989 census likely to re-identify as 'Ukrainian.' The 2001 Ukrainian census

found Russians had declined from 22 to 17 percent and recent surveys have found this has shrunk even further to only 6 percent (Razumkov Centre 2017, p.5). The core group who most likely re-identified as Ukrainian were the families with mixed parents who had to choose the identity of one of them for the Soviet census. Rapawy (1997) calculated that 'real Russians' in Ukraine could be as low as 10.8 percent, or less than half their recorded number in the 1989 census, an estimate which is close to that of 6 percent found in recent surveys (Razumkov Centre 2017, p.5).

Lowell Barrington (2001) found 57 percent of Ukrainians based their identity upon citizenship, 34 percent on ethnicity and only 13 percent on language. The ethnic component in Ukrainian identity has increased in the two decades since this was published but nevertheless, Barrington (2001) showed that a majority of Ukrainians were loyal to their country. In an article written two decades later, Barrington (2021) found civic identity was continuing to grow in Ukraine alongside an ethnic allegiance (see Chapter 2).

Russia has used the term compatriots in a flexible manner. In addition to speaking the Russian language, it is also understood as showing support for a pro-Russian geopolitical orientation, voting for pro-Russian political forces, backing the elevation of Russian to a second state language, opposing colour revolutions, and standing with Russia during and since the 2014 crisis.

High levels of civic and ethno-cultural attachment to Ukraine pointed to the concept of 'compatriot' as being a misnomer. But this misnomer had serious consequences because it influenced Russian attitudes and security policies towards Ukraine. As early as September 1993, Kozyrev demanded that the UN recognise Russia as possessing 'special responsibility' to protect Russian speakers in the former USSR. His statement pre-empted President Medvedev's military invasion of Georgia by fifteen years and Putin's military invasion of Ukraine by 21 years, both to ostensibly protect compatriots.

Russia has always demanded Ukraine follow the example of Belarus and elevate Russian into a state language. The elevation of Russian in Belarus has shown how this has not led to the equality of two languages but the

continuation of Soviet-era Russification by squeezing out Belarusian. Upon being elected in 1994 Kuchma promised to make Russian an ‘official language’ while keeping Ukrainian as the ‘state language;’ the distinction between ‘state’ and ‘official’ languages is ambiguous. Kuchma never fulfilled his election pledge. Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin and Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov pressured Kuchma to implement his election pledge. Nearly two decades on, the Party of Regions never commanded sufficient support in parliament to change the constitution to make Russian a second state language; instead they adopted a language law in 2012 which made Russian an official language in regions where it was spoken by a large number of people, as in south-eastern Ukraine.

Who the Kremlin identified as compatriots in Ukraine was unclear. Would Kuchma, Zelenskyy and Yanukovych be compatriots? Kuchma and Zelenskyy were Russian speakers when they began their political careers in the early 1990s and 2019, respectively, and learnt Ukrainian in their official positions. Yanukovych was a Russian speaker but had to learn Ukrainian as Governor of Donetsk (1997-2002). What of the large number of Russian-speaking Ukrainian *siloviki* who are defending Ukraine and fighting against the Russian proxies DNR and LNR? Are Ukraine’s Russian speakers still considered to be ‘compatriots’ if they are fighting Putin’s Russian World?

The Kremlin not only attaches importance to speaking Russian but more importantly, going through the ritualistic motions of toadyism towards the Russian ‘elder brother,’ understanding Ukraine’s place in the eastern Slavic hierarchy and believing Ukraine is naturally at home only in the Russian World. This would rule out applying the term ‘compatriots’ to all Ukrainian presidents, with the exception of Yanukovych, and Russian-speaking patriots in Ukraine. Barely two years into his presidency, Russian media began using anti-Semitic rhetoric to describe Zelenskyy as a ‘nationalist,’ ‘Russophobe’ and US and Western puppet:

(The) Jew Zelenskyy declared the Russian nation an enemy of Ukraine. However, you do not expect anything else from the fascist president. Ukrainian President Zelenskyy changed his rhetoric that the main enemy of

the Ukrainians is supposedly Russia, now, according to him, it is the Russians who are the invaders.[14]

State institutions and Russian irredentism

During the first half of Yeltsin's presidency the executive and parliament locked horns over foreign and security policies and in particular Russia's relations with the so-called 'Near Abroad' (i.e., the former USSR). The State Duma was more disruptive than influential, affecting the timing of executive policies rather than Russia's strategic direction (Malcolm and Pravda 1996). In 1993-1994, a compromise emerged between the executive and parliament (Malcolm and Pravda 1996) and by the second half of Yeltsin's presidency, 'the new deal in Russian policy wipes out all the ideological differences between the executive authorities and the left opposition at the Duma.'[15] The Kremlin's attitudes, policies and demands towards its neighbours, including Ukraine, can be analysed in five areas: [1]

Yeltsin's Press Secretary Pavel Voshchanov challenged Ukraine's borders (Laba 1996, p.10). In the early 1990s, centrists and the 'red-brown' coalition threatened Ukraine with dismemberment and 'Lebanonisation' if it broke free of Russia's sphere of influence (Lester 1994, p.218).

2 At the heart of Russia's view of 'sovereignty' was an arrogant and chauvinistic attitude towards its neighbours, and in particular towards Ukraine and Belarus. 'What the Kremlin wants from the Ukrainian government is the public demonstration of compliance with Moscow's preponderance' (Gretskiy 2020, p.19). This was most vividly seen in how the Kremlin viewed the election of Yanukovych in 2010 as the beginning of an era of 'normality' whereby Ukraine would act in the manner of Belarus as a Russian dominion. Gretskiy (2020, p.21) writes: 'Such an attitude is deeply rooted in the minds of all the Russian political elite and society, who, by inertia, used to treat Ukraine condescendingly as a younger brother.'

3 Russia preferred to maintain the Russian-Ukrainian border at a symbolic (Soviet era) level because it considered the borders of the Russian Federation to be 'un-Russian.' KPRF leader Gennadiy Zyuganov said: 'We

do not need any demarcation lines with a country with which we have fraternal relations'.[16] Chairman of the State Duma Committee on CIS Affairs Konstantin Zatulin criticised Ukraine's infatuation with the recognition of its borders 'which never existed in history' and now belonged to 'a state that never existed in history.'[17]

4 *Hybrid Warfare and Frozen Conflicts:* Russia has been a revisionist power disrespectful of the sovereignty of neighbouring states, manufacturing frozen conflicts in Moldova, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, supporting Crimean separatism in the 1990s and more recently Crimea's annexation, and hybrid warfare in 'New Russia' and the Donbas. Pavel Grachev, Russian Minister of Defence in 1992-1996, supported Armenia's occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts and his armed forces were involved in the manufacturing of frozen conflicts in Moldova and Georgia.[18] Frozen conflicts in Azerbaijan (19881994), Georgia (1988-1993) and Moldova (1990-1992) were created during the late Soviet and supposedly 'liberal' phase of Yeltsin's presidency.

5 Ukraine was always a strong supporter of the territorial integrity of post-communist states. The 1997 Russia-Ukraine treaty 'brought little in the way of friendship, opposed as it was by many Russian elites' and the treaty 'had little impact on Ukrainian-Russian relations' (D'Anieri 2019, p.258), as was clearly seen in 2014. This was because Russia had 'deep and fundamental' disagreements over Ukraine and Russia always insisted it 'considered a voice in Ukraine as essential' (D'Anieri 2019, pp.258259). Russia justified its invasion and annexation of Crimea using spurious interpretations of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum and 1997 treaty which had nothing in common with international law (D'Anieri 2019, pp.203, 217; Belton 2020, p.384; Hosaka 2018, p.346) and everything in common with a disdain for Ukrainian statehood.

6 *Integration*: In August 1992, Russia proposed a Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership which was rejected the following month by Kyiv. The main Ukrainian objections included provisions for dual citizenship, joint military and foreign policy, an inability to join another alliance without the consent of the other party, the formation of Russian military bases in Ukraine on behalf of the CIS, joint customs, taxation and

trade policies as well as a ‘single regional military-strategic space.’ The treaty would have created a *de facto* Ukrainian-Russian union or confederation;[19] that is, it would have been akin to Solzhenitsyn’s Russian Union. The bulk of the provisions of Russian proposals for its treaty with Ukraine were included in the January 1993 CIS Charter. Because of this background, Ukraine never signed the CIS Charter.

7 *‘Belarusianisation’:* Russians should be recognised as a second titular nation with the Ukrainian state continuing to support an eastern Slavic identity, as in Belarus, which had been promoted in the USSR (Shulman 2005; Wojnowski 20 1 7).[20] Russia also doggedly pursued dual citizenship for Ukrainians, which Kyiv has always opposed.[21]Loshkariov and Sushentsov (2018, pp.75-77) claim an eastern Slavic, but not an ethnic Ukrainian identity is inclusive. They define an eastern Slavic identity in very broad terms to include Russian as a state language, federalisation, quotas for ethnic Russians in state institutions, and teaching of a common history (Loshkariov and Sushentsov 2018, pp.75-77).

8 *Language:* Russian policymakers of all political persuasions have perennially demanded that Ukraine elevate Russian to a state language, as in Belarus. Seeing the Russian language as an important means to maintain Moscow’s influence in its Eurasian sphere of influence, the demand for Russian to become a state language has also been made towards Caucasian and Central Asian successor states of the USSR.

In May 1997, Yeltsin finally travelled to Ukraine after his visit had been postponed nine times and signed a border treaty that recognised Ukrainian sovereignty over Sevastopol and Crimea. Nevertheless, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Serov confusingly stated this did not mean Russia had stopped recognising Sevastopol as a ‘Russian town.’[22] This could take place if the Russian Black Sea Fleet remained indefinitely based in Sevastopol, a step Yanukovych permitted in the 2010 ‘Kharkiv Accords’ and for which he was criminally charged with treason.[23]

After the treaty was signed it took until December 1998 for the Russian State Duma to ratify it and then two months more for the Federation Council to follow suit. Russia’s parliamentary ratification was conditioned

on Crimea's adoption of a constitution which took place in October 1998 and came into force after its ratification by the Ukrainian parliament in December. This was the first time Ukraine's border had been recognised by Russia since the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav - and it lasted a mere 17 years.[24] Nevertheless, Russia expressed no interest in the delimitation or demarcation of its border with Ukraine.[25] Then Prime Minister Chernomyrdin said, 'we are not advocating putting poles on the border - there will be no fence.'[26] Russian politicians always ruled out demarcation of the border with Ukraine and visas between both countries.[27]

The Russian executive did not directly back territorial claims towards Crimea and Sevastopol, but these were made throughout the 1990s by both houses of the Russian parliament and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov (see Chapter 8).[28] President Yeltsin used parliamentary territorial claims as a means of maintaining pressure on Ukraine to agree to compromises, such as over the Black Sea Fleet. As one large analysis of Russian policy towards Sevastopol concluded, the idea that the Russian executive was opposed to parliament's territorial claims towards Crimea and Sevastopol 'is too weak to be taken seriously.'[29] The Russian executive regularly distanced itself from State Duma resolutions while at the same time declaring Sevastopol to be a 'Russian city.' Russian Security Council secretary Nikolai Lebed wrote an article for the Crimean media entitled 'Sevastopol is a Russian City.'[30] Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev said, 'Sevastopol is a town of Russian glory.'[31]

The delimitation of Ukraine's borders was finalised during Putin's January 2003 visit to Kyiv during the 'Year of Russia in Ukraine' and to simultaneously attend a CIS summit. Putin said Russia, 'has been knowingly working towards the signing of an agreement on the border with Ukraine.'[32] This was another example of fake news as Russia never went ahead with delimitation.

Weakness of Russian liberalism

Some Russian democrats may not have sympathised with the un-diplomatic tone of Russian Supreme Soviet resolutions; nevertheless, they joined

forces with Russian nationalists in refusing to recognise Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol. Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the State Duma committee on International Affairs and a leading member of the social-democratic *Yabloko* Party, initiated the first votes as early as January 1992 in the Russian Supreme Soviet to exert pressure upon Ukraine to relinquish control of Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet.[33] In exchange for diplomatic recognition of Ukraine, Lukin proposed Kyiv should transfer sovereignty over Crimea to Russia. Lukin also believed Russia should lay claim to all the Soviet armed forces.[34] Grigory Yavlinsky, *Yabloko* leader, had always considered Sevastopol to be historically a Russian town;[35] the first political party Navalny joined in 2000 was *Yabloko*.

Lukin was supported by Boris Nemtsov, the then respected reformist governor of Nizhni Novgorod and deputy prime minister, who also described Sevastopol as a 'Russian city acquired with Russian blood.'[36] The Mayor of St. Petersburg and a leading member of the Movement for Democratic Reforms, Anatoly Sobchak, made similar claims Sevastopol was a 'Russian city,' saying Ukraine had no right to sovereignty over the port. In 1991-1996, Putin worked in Sobchak's St. Petersburg office. A Ukrainian newspaper pointed out:

It would be a mistake, however, to boil down the 'Crimean' activities of Moscow to a method of scoring points by Russian politicians because those who want to see Crimea as Russian prevail among the helmsmen of the Kremlin's course.[37]

Russian liberals were no different to nationalists in their imperialism towards Crimea and Sevastopol.

Jeremy Lester (1994) divided Russian political attitudes towards Ukraine into four groups: 1) Westernisers; 2) Centrists; 3) National Patriots; and 4) Democratic left. Glenn Chafetz (1996-1997, pp.683-684) defined three constituencies in Russian foreign policy: 1) Liberals; 2) Statists; and 3) Authoritarians. In a later analysis, Gretskiy (2020, pp.16-18) divided Russian politicians into: 1) Westernisers; 2) Moderate Liberals; 3) Centrists and Moderate Conservatives; and 4) Neo-Communists and Nationalists.

Lester (1994) and Gretskiy (2020) proposed similar frameworks, although with a few nuances. Lester (1994) was one of a small number of scholars who showcased centre-left forces who had re-emerged in the Gorbachev era but became progressively marginalised in the 1990s. One reason was they were the most amorphous of the four groups discussed by Lester (1994, pp.221, 224). As with nearly all Russian politicians, the Russian moderate left also preferred a union over a Russian nation-state. Gretskiy's (2020) Westernisers and Moderate Liberals could to all intents and purposes be merged into one group. Combining Lester (1994), Chafetz (1996-1997) and Gretskiy (2020) we arrive at three groups of Russian attitudes to Ukraine: [2]

Federation, believed borders could be changed and the independence of Ukraine was unacceptable.' That is, they did not believe that the Russian Federation was the Russian 'imagined community.'

3 *National Patriots, Neo-Communists and Nationalists*: A 'red-brown' coalition formed the basis for the *Rossijskij obshchenarodnyj sojuz* (Russian All-Peoples Union - ROS) launched in October 1991, the Russian Unity group in the Russian Supreme Soviet established in April 1992 and the *Front natsionalnogo spasenija* (National Salvation Front - FNS) created in November 1992. The FNS united the extreme left (e.g., KPRF), Agrarians (including well known Russian 'village prose writer' Valentin Rasputin), and official (LDPR) and opposition nationalists on the extreme right. The majority of these groups and parties had signed the reactionary July 1991 'A Word to the People' appeal and had supported the hard-line August 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d'etat against Gorbachev and Yeltsin, respectively. They supported similar policies to the second group but differed in being more xenophobic towards the West and hostile towards Western values. They believed the disintegration of the USSR was a catastrophe for Russia and were unequivocal in stating an independent Ukraine was 'illegal and erroneous' (Gretskiy 2020, p.16).

In 1994-1996, Russia's brief flirtation with a liberal, pro-Western foreign policy was replaced by a return to 'besieged Russia,' a development which Vladimir Shlapentokh (1995) believed was a harbinger of Russia's drift towards authoritarianism and restoration of empire. Yeltsin provided concessions to the *siloviki* who were needed to defeat the 'red-brown' 1993

coup d'etat and importantly, because many *siloviki* supported the putsch. 'The presence of so many leading former party officials, army and KGB generals among the leaders of the right is as striking as the survival of so many of the old ideas,' Laqueur (1993, p.294) wrote. Yuri N.A. Afanasyev (1994) pointed out that with the influence of the *siloviki* and growing support for Russian great power ideology, 'Nothing is left of the latest reform movement but rhetoric.' Afanasyev (1994, pp.24, 26) predicted that those clamouring for 'hope to restore the empire' and 'return to the traditional road and reject attempts to become a modern society' would lead Russia to disaster.

By 1994, only a few months after the failed coup d'etat, Kozyrev was demanding recognition of Russia's special role as the leading country in the former Soviet space of Eurasia claiming, 'It is Russia's mission to be first among equals.'[38] Russian foreign policy became more nationalistic after the failed 1993 coup d'etat by a 'red-brown' alliance and the December 1993 Russian elections when Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party won 22.92 percent and the KPRF 12.4 percent. Only three years after the disintegration of the USSR, 53 percent of Russians had voted for extremist political forces on the left and right (Brudny 1998, pp.260-261). Yegor Gaidar's pro-Western *Demokraticheskiy vybor Rossii* (Democratic Choice of Russia) Party was soundly defeated, receiving only 15.51 percent.

Russian foreign policy transitioned towards accommodating nationalist demands, one example of which was Yeltsin's support for a Russian-Belarusian union during the 1996 presidential elections. In the 1996 Russian elections, 'The Restoration of the USSR is a dominant theme' with 'Yeltsin, Ziuganov, even Gorbachev and Yavlinskii in favour of the idea.'[39] In 1996, Kozyrev was replaced by Primakov who reinforced the transition of the Kremlin's foreign policy from that of Russian identity viewing itself as European to Eurasian. Primakov's appointment in the same year as the creation of the Russian-Belar-usian Union, 'implemented a radical departure' from Gorbachev and Yeltsin's accommodation with the West (Rumer 2019). The 'Primakov Doctrine' has 'guided Russian policy for over two decades' in striving for a multipolar world as the alternative to a Western dominated unipolar world and opposing NATO enlargement (Rumer 2019). For the purposes of this book, the most important aspect of

the ‘Primakov Doctrine’ is its insistence on Russian primacy in the former USSR and Russian leadership in Eurasian integration (Rumer 2019). With Ukraine the second largest population in Eurasia after Russia, these two aspects of the ‘Primakov Doctrine’ have had strategic implications for Kyiv.

Ideas and ideologies were needed to cement the transition from Gorbachev’s Europeanism to Eurasianism which came with the election of Putin four years later. Primakov’s term as chairman of the SVR in 1991-1996, minister of foreign affairs (1996-1998) and prime minister (1998-1999) provided the perfect transition for Putin from his time as chairman of the FSB (1998-1999) and prime minister (1999-2000) to president. Primakov and Putin both came from KGB backgrounds and saw eye to eye on Russia’s mission; the SVR and FSB had in effect returned *Chekists* to power (Krysh-tanovskaya and White 2003; Skak 1996, 2016). In the late 1990s, Primakov’s and Luzhkov’s *Otechestvo - Vsya Rossiya* (Fatherland - All Russia) Party competed with Putin’s Unity Party for power but with all three leaders being Russian great power nationalists they had no ideological conflicts. In 2001, *Yedinstvo* (Unity) and Fatherland - All Russia merged to create the United Russia Party, uniting Russian elites in their pursuit of the revival of Russia as a great power. Putin did not artificially manufacture widespread support for Russian great power nationalism, he rode it to power and then fashioned, moulded and broadened it during his more than two decades in power from a ‘red-brown’ to ‘red-white-brown’ coalition (see Chapter 5).

During the second half of the 1990s, Russia experienced the rising influence of Eurasianism in Russian foreign policy (Kerr 1995). Igor Zevelev (1996, p.278) wrote of Russia transitioning into a ‘hegemonic regional power’ which combined state building in the Russian Federation with ‘the creation of a formally sovereign, but effectively dependent countries around Russia.’ In 1994, the Russian media were already abuzz with ‘talk of Russia’s neoimperial ambitions’[40] and ahead of the Russian-Belarusian union, ‘the creation of a new state on the territory of the former Soviet Union is a historically ordained necessity.’[41] Russians viewed the former USSR as the ‘lost territory’ of historic Russia (Wilson 2014, p.VII).

In the second half of the 1990s, Russia transitioned to a great power nationalistic consensus on four policies:

1 ‘Russia’ was larger in size than the Russian Federation.

2 A union or empire was the ‘natural’ state of affairs for Russia.

3 Russia was a great power with the unquestionable right to be hegemon in Eurasia.

4 An independent Ukraine was an aberration; nevertheless, it could continue to exist in its Soviet era borders if it remained within Russia’s sphere of influence.

Already in the 1990s, the majority of Russian political forces held a ‘caustic disparagement and disregard of Ukraine as an independent state, its sovereignty, and its territorial integrity’ (Gretskiy 2020, p.16). From Kyiv’s perspective, there was little to divide non-liberal Russian political groups in their negative attitudes towards Ukraine, except over the question of how to achieve Russia’s goals. Writing long after Lester (1994) and a few years subsequent to the 2014 crisis, Gretskiy (2020, pp.16-18) was no longer able to differentiate moderate liberals from centrists and moderate conservatives from neo-communists and nationalists. This was because, Gretskiy (2020, pp.16-18) believed, they all pursued ‘primitive geopolitics.’ Gretskiy (2020, pp.15-18) defined ‘primitive geopolitics’ as a belief in being a great power with a sphere of influence in Eurasia where non-Russian states held limited sovereignty.

During the second half of the 1990s, the Russian executive and parliament were in agreement in pursuing tougher attitudes towards Ukraine and NATO enlargement and supporting closer CIS integration and a Russian-Belarusian union. Many Russian great power nationalists viewed the Russian-Belarusian union as a stepping stone to a revived USSR. The State Duma repeatedly denounced the disintegration of the USSR and viewed those who had been involved in its demise as ‘traitors’ to Russia. Putin agreed with them.

Nine components of Russian identity that germinated during the 1990s became constants in Russian security policies after 2000: [3]

2 *Great Power.* As a great power, Russia deserves respect from the USA and other Western powers (Hill and Gaddy 2015, pp.42, 263). Russia's great power 'role in the world would first of all depend on its performance in organising the geopolitical space of the CIS' (Kremeniuk 1997, p.259).

3 *Messianism:* Russia's special mission in the world has historical roots going back to Fyodor Dostoevsky in the mid-18th and Nikolai Berdyaev in the early 20th centuries (Scanlan 1995). Messianism 'became a defining feature in that country's political discourse, although the nature and extent of this role remain subject to debate' (Urban 1994, p.765). As a great power, Russia believes it has an inalienable right to undertake its mission in Eurasia (Skak 2016). Statists and authoritarians supported 'Russia's unique mission' and believed Russia should 'dominate the territory of the former Soviet Union' (Richter 1995, p.81).

4 *Monopoly:* Russia insisted that only 'CIS (i.e., Russian) peacekeeping forces' could undertake peacekeeping operations in Eurasia.

5 *Benevolence:* Russian and Soviet past interaction with non-Russian peoples in Eurasia was benevolent, from which they benefitted.

6 *Pan-Russian Nation:* The Kremlin prioritised relations towards Ukraine and Belarus as parts of the inner 'Near Abroad.' Ukraine and Belarus could only exist as 'independent' states in their Soviet era borders if they remained within Russia's sphere of influence.

7 *Crimea and Sevastopol*: The peninsula could only remain part of Ukraine if it remained within Russia's sphere of influence.

8 *Conspiracy Mania:* White Russian emigre nationalist Ivan Ilyin's writings (see Chapter 5) reinforced an already deep Soviet conspiratorial view of Western machinations against Russia (Barbashin and Thoburn 2015). In a regime dominated by *Chekist* conspiracy culture, Russian leaders believe the West is hostile to Russia and Russian interests in Eurasia (Skak 2016). The West is preventing Ukraine's alignment with the Russian World. 'The

widespread and highly legitimized diffusion of conspiracy theories is a concern in itself, as it influences a country's analytical capacity adversely in a core area: the academic study of security, military and international affairs' (Kragh, Andermo and Makashova 2021; Skak 2016, p.334). Conspiracy theories re-emerged in full force to explain how Putin saw Russia as being defeated by the Western-backed 2004 Orange Revolution. During the 2014 crisis, after over a decade of Putin's rule, Russian television 'took the conspiratorial, anti-Western bias to hitherto unprecedented levels of intensity' (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.261).

9 *Youth*: Russian youth became ambivalent about democratic values, opposed to foreign influences, driven by Russian nationalism, and supportive of the regime's unwillingness to apologise to the three Baltic states for the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact leading to their five-decade Soviet occupation. During Putin's presidency, Russian youth gradually bought into the rehabilitation of Stalin (Mendelson and Gerber 2005-2006, p.88; Levada Centre 2018).

From 1994-1996, the overwhelming majority of Russian political parties and civic groups supported full integration of the CIS into a new Union. In Russia's December 1995 parliamentary elections, all the election programmes included section's devoted to the defence of Russian compatriots in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and the three Baltic republics. Centrist political forces restricted a new 'union' to the economic sphere while conservatives, nationalists and communists called for a full economic, political and military union akin to the former USSR. Russia, Ukraine and Belarus were to be the core of a new union in the same manner as they had been the core of the Soviet Union.

The rapid changes taking place in Russia could be seen in the collapse in the vote for Gaydar's *Demokraticheskij vybor Rossii - Obedinennie demokraty* (Russia's Democratic Choice-United Democrats - DVR-OD) from to 15.51 percent in 1993 to just under 4 percent two years later. DVR-OD and Konstantin Borovoy's *Partiia Ekonomicheskoi svobody* (Economic Freedom Party) were unpopular because of painful economic and social reforms in the last four years and because they had devoted little attention to CIS integration. DVR-OD were one of the few Russian parties who

stated their readiness to ‘oppose remnants of imperialist ideology and militaristic mindset.’ In contrast, *Yabloko* leader Yavlinsky, author of the October 1991 Economic Union programme, supported the creation of a fully-fledged Economic Union, especially with Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The Independents Bloc, co-chaired by Presidential Governor of Moscow Vladimir Komchatov, as well as the *Partiya rossiiskogo edinstva i soglasiya* (Party of Russian Unity and Accord - PRES) led by former Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Shakhrai, supported the restoration of economic, political and military links of former Soviet republics. Centrist ‘party of power’ *Nash dom - Rossiya* (Our Home is Russia) led by former Prime Minister and later Ambassador to Ukraine Chernomyrdin was a supporter of CIS integration and a close alliance with Ukraine. Our Home is Russia linked the revival of Russia ‘as a world power’ to full CIS integration, a policy commonly associated with the extreme left and right of Russian politics. Our Home is Russia supported a system of collective security, joint defence of CIS external border’s, collective peacekeeping as well as a, ‘common economic and ethnocultural space.’ Our Home is Russia Deputy and Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs Aleksei Manannikov supported ‘pressure instruments’ to influence the former Soviet republics with the main targets Ukraine, the three Baltic states and Kazakhstan. So-called centrists and the ‘red-brown’ coalition were on the same page in every area of Russian security policy towards Eurasia and particularly on the need for Ukraine to remain closely integrated.

[1]

Borders: Russia’s definition of ‘sovereignty’ had nothing to do with a definition found in Western dictionaries of international relations terms. Russian democrats and nationalists argued Ukraine could only hold sovereignty within its Soviet era borders if it remained within Russia’s sphere of influence (Gretskiy 2020, p.21). In August and November 1990, Russian-Ukrainian treaties were drawn up between their respective democratic parliamentary blocs and at the level of heads of republics which recognised the inviolability of current borders and renounced territorial

claims against one another. After Ukraine's Declaration of Independence in August 1991, Russia claimed these provisions only applied if Ukraine remained within the USSR (and later the CIS). Only three days after Ukraine declared independence on 24 August 1991,

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Westernisers and Moderate Liberals: They were an amorphous group lacking internal coherence and unity and similar to the Democratic Left became quickly marginalised. Genuinely, post-imperial, this group recognised the independence of the non-Russian republics and did not advance territorial claims towards Crimea and south-eastern Ukraine. In the first half of the 1990s, the groups leading members, such as Sobchak, Lukin and Rutskoi, transitioned to the second group. This should not be entirely surprising; Rutskoi, for example, had been a member of the Soviet regime's *Otechestvo.*

2 *Centrists and Moderate Conservatives:* It is unclear why the term 'centrist' is used to define politicians who are interventionist, restorationist and support Russian hegemony over Eurasia. Former Westernisers, such as Rutskoi, outlined a Russian 'Monroe Doctrine' for Eurasia and supported reintegration of former Soviet republics into Gorbachev and Yeltsin's earlier proposal for a Union of Sovereign States. Lester (1994, p.210) wrote: 'They did not equate "Russia" with the Russian

3

Victimhood: A deep sense of victimhood became apparent in the first half of the 1990s and has grown to major proportions under Putin (see Chapter 5). The disintegration of the USSR 'is the central event bound to shape the course of Russian nationalism and of Russian politics' (Laqueur 1993, p.276). Kotkin (2015, p.150) described this as 'emotive nationalism' exhibited through anti-Western xenophobia and Russian exceptionalism. Hutchings and Tolz (2015, p.250) discuss how Russian victimhood 'acquired historically unprecedented proportions' and manifested itself 'as the most exploited and discriminated against peoples.' What was confined to the nationalist fringe in the first half of the 1990s has been

‘mainstreamed by intellectuals, media personalities and politicians in the past 15 years’ (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.250).

‘Red-brown’ coalition

The Russian SFSR republican Communist Party which existed in 1990-1991 was reactionary and a supporter of the hard-line August 1991 putsch. Zyuganov signed the July 1991 ‘A Word to the People’ and supported the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d’etat.

Zyuganov did not therefore need to expend much energy rewriting the KPRF programme along nationalist lines (Urban 1997, p.277). KPRF leader Zyuganov’s Russian chauvinism towards Ukraine was the same as that found on the extreme right. Zyuganov was an early upholder of a pan-Russian nation and supporter of Solzhenitsyn’s ‘Russian union’ of the three eastern Slavs.[42] Forgetting seven decades of Soviet rule which had recognised the existence of a separate (but close) Ukrainian people, Zyuganov said, ‘Great Russia, Little Russia, and White Russia are constituent parts of one and the same Russian people, which has been artificially divided.’[43] Zyuganov supported Ukraine’s membership of the Russian-Belarusian union which he viewed as a stepping stone to a revived USSR. Zyuganov called for the ‘reunion’ of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.[44] Putin also uses the same discourse of a ‘divided Russian nation.’

The KPRF led the National Patriotic Union of Russia and cooperated with the even more extremist Union for the Spiritual Rebirth of the Fatherland and United Workers Front of Russia (Ishiyana 1998, pp. 61-85). The KPRF’s allies on the left were Stalinists and national Bolsheviks, such as Viktor Anpilov who had been a member of the *Pamiat* organisation, and on the right, the neo-Nazi RNE and ‘red-brown’ FNS (Ishiyana 1998). *Vlast - narodu!* (Power to the People!) led by former Soviet Prime Minister Nikolay Ryzhkov and *Rossiyskaia kommunisticheskaia rabochaia partiia v sostave Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Russian Communist Workers’ Party of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - RKRP-KPSS) led by Viktor Tyulkin were even more extreme Russian nationalists than the KPRF, if that was indeed possible.

The KPRF united traditional communist ideals with Soviet and Russian great power nationalism playing to the imperial restorative mood in Russia

and belief in its historical messianism. The KPRF supported plebiscites throughout the former USSR which would launch a political, economic and military union as a, ‘stage-by-stage voluntary restoration of the (Soviet) Fatherland.’ In April 2021, showing he had never changed his great power nationalist views, Zyuganov called on Putin to recognise the independence of the DNR and LNR because 500,000 Russian citizens lived there who should be protected (i.e., they had been given Russian passports).[45] In Ukrainian eyes, there was little difference between communist Zyuganov and Eurasianist Dugin in their pursuit of the dismembering of Ukraine.

Russian nationalist groups also demanded the revival of a new union. The KRO emphasised defence of the rights of Russian-speaking compatriots outside Russia, including through military intervention. Vladimir Lebed, its co-chairman, outlined the KRO’s task as, ‘restoring Russia’s single defence space within its historic border’s: the Russian Empire and the USSR’ through political and economic integration. KRO understood ‘Russia’ to be the same as the Tsarist Empire and USSR. KRO believed the former USSR is ‘a part of the sphere of (Russia’s) vitally important interests.’

All the many other nationalist and imperialist groups which emerged in the first half of the 1990s in Russia, such as the *Slavianskoie Sobranie* (Slavic Assembly) and *Assambleiia Narodov Rossii* (Russian Peoples Assembly) supported territorial irredentism towards Crimea and the defence of Russian compatriots outside the Russian Federation. RNE was founded in 1990 as Russia’s first neo-Nazi party with a party symbol resembling a Nazi swastika. RNE leader Barkashov, ‘a leading anti-Semite’ (Laqueur 1993, p.262) is a supporter of Nazi ideology and his supporters routinely salute each other with a Nazi-style raised arm. In the 1990s, the RNE was the fourth largest political party in Russia after the KPRF, LDPR and Democratic Choice of Russia. The RNE’s allies in the 1990s were the KPRF, LDPR, and KRO and in the 2000s, the Motherland Party. RNE stood in opposition to Yeltsin throughout the 1990s. In 1993, RNE supported the ‘red-brown’ coalition in parliament in its armed standoff and coup d’etat against Yeltsin. Some RNE members were killed in the armed conflict, it was temporarily banned and Barkashov was briefly detained but released from prison in February 1994. As a neo-Nazi party, RNE members glorified violence, such as the 1993 coup d’etat, and undertook racist attacks against

Caucasian and Central Asian migrants. RNE paramilitaries fought alongside Russian proxies in Moldova's Transnistria region, Georgia's South Ossetia, Ukraine's Donbas, and for Russia in Chechnya. Officers in the Russian Ministry of Interior and the FSB were sympathetic to the RNE putting them in a good position to train and recruit mercenaries in 2014 for military action in eastern Ukraine (see Chapter 8).

The LDPR and Motherland Party were fake opposition and loyal nationalist political parties which had been created to take votes from the KPRF and opposition Russian nationalists. Yurii A. Levada (2004, p.49) described the LDPR as a 'completely artificial entity.' The LDPR called upon Russia to reclaim 'lost territories' as a step towards Russia being recreated, 'within its historically established geopolitical space within the borders of the former USSR...' LDPR leader Zhirinovsky was often invited to Russian TV where he made outlandish and extremist statements about Ukraine.

In the 1999 Russian elections the newly created Unity Party supported Putin who was planned as Yeltsin's successor. Unity understood Russia as a great power emanating from its hegemony over Eurasia, especially including Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine should act as close strategic partners, presumably in the same manner as in the USSR where Ukraine was encouraged by Soviet nationality policies to act as Russia's 'younger brother' (Armstrong 1959).

Putin and Unity did not invent any new ideas for the 1999 election campaign and its programme was little different to that proposed by the Prima-kov-Luzhkov alliance. Both political forces strongly supported great power nationalist policies which practically all Russian political parties had come to agree upon during the second half of the 1990s. Primakov, Luzhkov and Putin unreservedly believed that Ukraine was 'Russian,' had no sovereignty and was part of Russia's sphere of influence. Sowing the seeds for the 2014 crisis, all three believed Crimea and Sevastopol were Russian.

Conclusions

A pro-Western foreign policy lasted only a few years in the early 1990s during which Yeltsin rejected the Soviet concept of Russians acting as the 'elder brothers' of the non-Russian nations. This went against the grain of Russian political culture and Russian nationalism, and was quickly reversed. In 1994-1996, the Russian Federation transitioned from an identity based on Gorbachev's USSR as part of a 'common European home' to Russia at the centre of an exclusive Eurasian sphere of influence. In the mid-1990s, Russia held parliamentary and presidential elections which facilitated a transition towards great power nationalism, as witnessed by the return of old guard *siloviki* (Primakov) and 'red director' industrial elites (Chernomyrdin). In 1996-1999, these changes prepared the ground for Russia's state capture by Putin and *Chekists* in 2000.

Even Russian liberals in the late 1980s and early 1990s could not fathom Ukrainian complaints about Russification and denationalisation, demands for independence and the desire to distance Ukraine from the former Soviet space. All Russian political forces and leaders, including some liberals, were uncomfortable with Ukraine's separatism from Russia, believed that Ukraine should be within Russia's sphere of influence, could not accept Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol and, for the 'red-brown' coalition, Ukrainian rule over its south-eastern regions. In 1991, only Ukraine of the three eastern Slavs pursued the goal of an independent state by holding a vote in parliament (adopted by 346 votes with only one opposed) and a referendum (receiving 92.3 percent for independence) and following the latter, calling for the dissolution of the USSR at the Bielaviezskaja Pusca state dacha meeting on 7-8 December 1991. Russia never pursued independence from the USSR. Belarus declared independence but did not hold a vote in parliament or a referendum.

Three nation-building models were available to Russian leaders after 1991. The first was maintaining the Soviet myth of close but separate 'brotherly' Russian and Ukrainian peoples. The second, following in the footsteps of Turkey from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, by forging a post-imperial Russian national identity and recognising an independent Ukrainian state. The third was returning to a national identity based on Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre great power nationalism and chauvinism denying the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. The first identity continued to have

influence through Soviet nostalgia in support of a revived USSR but in the 1990s it was side-lined after fusing with great power nationalists in the ‘red-brown’ coalition. In the 2000s, the first and third identities expanded to a ‘red-white-brown’ coalition which flatly denied the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. The second, Russia’s liberal, post-imperial identity - its weakest - became quickly marginalised by 1993-1994.

When Putin was first elected to power in 2000 his ‘obsession’ (Zygar 2016, p.85) with Ukraine was found among practically every strand of Russian politician and political party. Unlike Yeltsin, his predecessor, Putin transformed his ‘obsession’ into military aggression against Ukraine, which is the subject of the next chapter.

Notes

1 *Interfax*, 21 November 1997.

2 https://www.ridl.io/ru/mog-li-zapad-spasti-rossiju-ot-samoj-sebja.

3 https://www.ridl.io/ru/mog-li-zapad-spasti-rossiju-ot-samoj-sebja.

4 *Moscow News*, no.44, 1992.

5 *Argumenty i Fakty*, no.27, 1997.

6 *Vysokyy Zamok*, 18-20 July 1997.

7 *Reuters*, 3 August 1994.

8 https://www.ridl.io/ru/mog-li-zapad-spasti-rossiju-ot-samoj-sebja.

9 *Vserossiyskaia chrezvychaynaia komissiia* (All-Russian Extraordinary Commission) was the first Bolshevik Party and Soviet secret service from 1917-1922. *Chekists* is the term which is used for the descendants of the differently named Soviet secret services.

10 *Novaia Ezhednevnaia Gazeta*, 7 July 1993.

11 Sergei Stepashin in *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 11 August 1993.

12 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 19 August 1992.

13 Kozyrev in *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 22 September 1993.

14 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/fascist-zelensky-declared-the-russian-nation-an-enem y-of-ukraine.

15 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 31 December 1996.

16 *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 21 February 1997.

17 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 1-7 April 1995.

18 https://media.az/politics/1067820528/kak-rossiyskiy-general-armyanskogo-proisho zhdeniya-sodeystvoval-okkupacii-karabaha-foto/?s=08.

19 *Vechirnyy Kyiv*, 21 September and *The Guardian*, 23 September 1992.

20 *Interfax*, 19 March 1999.

21 *Krymskaia Pravda*, 3 August 1999.

22 NTV, 2 June 1997.

23 https://www.unian.info/politics/crimean-occupation-yanukovych-faces-charges-for-kharkiv-accords-on-russia-navy-11301863.html.

24 *Holos Ukrayiny*, 6 May 1999.

25 *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, 3 June 1997.

26 *Itar-Tass*, 28 May 1997.

27 *Vechirnyy Kyiv*, 16 May, *Ukrayina Moloda*, 10 June, *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, 21 June and *Den*, 2 September 1997.

28 *Interfax,* 17 December 1996.

29 ‘Sevastopol-misto Rosiyskykh zazikhan. Analiz terytorialnykh pretenziy z boku Rosiyskoii Federatsii shchodo Krymu,’ *Narodna Armiya*, 27 February 1997.

30 *Flag Rodiny,* 5 October and *Krymskaia Pravda*, 10 October 1996; Valeriy Samo-valov and Kononenko of the National Security and Defence Council in *Uriadovyy*

Kuryer, 4 January and *Krymska Svitlytsya*, 16 May 1997; ‘Konflikt v Krymu,’ *Flot Ukrayiny,* 2 August 1997; and Vitaliy Palamarchuk, ‘Sevastopol: Vektory, Stanu i Rozvytku,’ *Narodna Armiya*, 28 May 1997. See Nikolai Savchenko, *Anatomiya Neobiavlennoy Voynyy* (Kyiv: Ukrainian Perspectives, 1997).

31 *Argumenty i Fakty,* no.27, 1997.

32 *Itar-Tass,* 28 January 2003.

33 *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, 22 January 1992.

34 *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn*, October 1997.

35 *Radio Mayak*, 1 June 1997.

36 *Itar-Tass*, 20-21 January 1997.

37 *Vseukrainskiie Vedomosti*, 18 January 1996.

38 *Washington Post*, 12 January 1994.

39 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 1 March 1996.

40 *Rossiiskiie Vesti*, 4 April 1994.

41 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 30 September 1994.

42 The election platform of the KPRF can be found in *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, 23 November 1999.

43 *Itar-Tass*, 7-9 December 1999.

44 https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2010/08/17/5307414.

45 https://lenta.ru/news/2021/04/21/zyuganov.

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5 Vladimir Putin

‘Gatherer of Russian lands’

There is no doubt as to the Austro-German origin of the legend of the existence of a separate Ukrainian nation.

White Emigre Prince Wolkonsky (1920, p.160)

Ukrainians are a socio-political group who do not have any ethnos. They are just a socio-political group that appeared at the end of the nineteenth century by means of manipulation by the Austro-Hungarian administration which occupied Galicia.

Russian Imperial Movement leader Stanislav Vorobyev (2020)

The Ukrainian factor was specifically played out on the eve of World War I by the Austrian special service. Why? This is well-known - to divide and rule (the Russian people).

Russian President Vladimir Putin (2020b)

Nearly two decades ago Tolz (2002) wrote of a new era in Russian-Ukrainian relations following the signing of an inter-state treaty in 1997 recognising their borders. Tolz (2002) was hopeful Russia had come round to accepting Ukraine’s sovereignty. In August 2001, only a year after being elected to his first term in office, Putin said: ‘The volume and character of Russian-Ukrai-nian cooperation, profound general cultural and historical traditions and ties between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples provide a good foundation for bringing relations between the two countries to a new level in an alliance.’[1] Nevertheless, there were already dangerous signs which had begun to emerge from the mid-1990s (see Chapters 3 and 4) and which had established strong foundations for a nationalist and Eurasianist revival in 1996-1999. Tolz (2001, p.225) herself warned: ‘To support the Ukrainian right to foreign independence, in theory, was one thing. To come to terms with an independent Ukraine, which was or was about to become a

reality, was another.' Her warning proved to be prescient. The editor of *Moscow News* [2] believed that 'Millions of Russians are convinced that, without Ukraine, it is impossible to speak not only of a great Russia but any kind of Russia at all.' He was referring to the importance of Ukraine to Russia's sense of being a great power and the centrality of Ukraine to the myth of the 'first Russian state' in Kyiv.

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Tolz (2002) was writing at a crucial moment in Russian history transitioning from President Yeltsin (1990-1999) to the then still largely unknown President Putin. This chapter analyses how Russian nationalism and national identity evolved from that of grudgingly recognising an independent Ukraine under Yeltsin to denying Ukraine and Ukrainians existed under Putin. Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre nationalism returned to Russia after the 'colonial glue' of the Soviet state disintegrated in 1991 (Clayton 1995). At the beginning of the Putin era, Ronald G. Suny (2001, pp.36, 38) wrote how Russian identity was tied to religion, shifting and growing territory, the state and union of 'great,' 'little' and 'white' Russians.

Although a small number of Western scholars had warned about periodic deteriorations in Russian-Ukrainian relations, few believed their relations would deteriorate into warfare, as it did in and since 2014. Walter Laqueur (1993, p.276) believed the loss of the 'cradle of Russian culture and identity' (i.e., Ukraine) was devastating to Russian nationalists, but added, invading Ukraine was 'hardly a practical proposition.' Edward L. Keenan's (1994, p.36) warning was more worrying, saying if pre-Soviet Russian myths of Ukraine were embraced by most Russians and 'Should however, either government find itself motivated to "act out" any of the relevant national myths - including the "national unity" myth unimaginable chaos could result.' Keenan's (1994, p.13) warning described the roots of what happened in 2014. Serhii Plokhy (2015, pp.347-354) believed that there are deep roots to the Russian-Ukrainian war which lie in Russia's inability to come to terms with an independent Ukraine.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first analyses two critical junctures in the development of Russian nationalism under Putin which had

a strategic impact on Russian-Ukrainian relations and Russian nationalist attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians. The second section discusses the thoughts and policies of White Russian emigres towards Russia as a great power, Russian sphere of influence in Eurasia, Ukraine and Ukrainians and Western values. The third and fourth sections analyse the growth of influence of Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigres on great power nationalism in Putin's Russia, how this impacted Russian-Ukrainian relations and led to the 2014 Ukraine crisis.

Critical junctures in Putin's nationalism

Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen (2007) define 'critical junctures' as crucial indicators of trends in politics, ideologies and societal developments. Under Putin there were two 'critical junctures' in the development of Russian nationalism in 2005-2008 (Umland 2012, p.23; Feklyunina 2016, p.781; D'Anieri 2019, pp.137, 139) and in 2011-2013.

Both critical junctures radicalised Russian policies towards Ukraine and Ukrainians. They increased the number of Russian policymakers who viewed Ukraine as the missing piece in the jigsaw, indispensable to rebuilding the 'natural unity' of the Russian World which would constitute the core around which Eurasian integration would coalesce (Feklyunina 2016, p.782). The USSR had been built around its eastern Slavic core; so too should the Russian World and Eurasian Economic Union. Without Ukraine, 'Moscow's claim to civilizational radiance looks hollow and weak' (Hudson 2015, p.335). In Putin's (2014a) speech during Crimea's official incorporation into Russia, Putin said, 'The ancient Rus is our common heritage - we cannot cope without each other.'

Russian elites agreed upon seven areas during the two critical junctures and in the lead up to the 2014 crisis:

1 *Great Power:* Restoring Russia as a great power was coupled with strident demands the USA and the West should respect Russia and its national interests in Eurasia and Ukraine.

2 *Messianism:* Moscow *de facto* believed it was the ‘third Rome’ and its mission was articulated through Russian exceptionalism (Tsyngakov 2007, p.381; Hill and Gaddy 2015, p.58; Kotkin 2015, p.150). Shmuel Sandler (1995) writes: ‘When external goals are conceptualized in terms of the historic mission and heritage of the nation, it influences the image of the enemy and the nature of the struggle.’

3 *Sphere of Privileged Interests:* Russia had a right to an exclusive ‘sphere of privileged interests’ in the former USSR (outside the three Baltic states). NATO and EU enlargement, Western democracy promotion and colour revolutions crossed the Kremlin’s red lines. Western interference into Ukraine crossed multiple red lines because the country was an inalienable part of ‘Holy Rus’ and, together with Russia and Belarus, the inner core of Eurasia.

4 *Sovereignty and Puppets*: Russia’s view of itself as the only truly sovereign country in Eurasia continued to grow at the same time as its disparagement of Ukraine as a puppet of the West was increasing. Ukrainian nationalists seeking to distance Ukraine from Russia have always been disparaged in Russian and Soviet rhetoric as puppets of the West (Erlacher 2013, pp.295, 297, 301-302, 311, 315).

5 *Glorification of the Past:* Russia’s Tsarist and Soviet past became increasingly glorified and whitewashed. Stalin and the Great Patriotic War became a *de facto* religious cult. This was at the same time as Ukrainians became increasingly critical of Russian and Soviet rule (see Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021).

6 *Superiority and Decadence*: Russian values and Eurasian civilisation were superior to those in the ‘decadent’ West. Russia defended itself from negative Western influences through the concept of ‘sovereign democracy’ with its roots in Slavophilism (Kortukov 2020, p.99).

7 *Ukraine:* Losing Ukraine to the West had been a Putin obsession from his first term in office (Zygar 2016, p.85). Putin asked a *Komsomolskaya Pravda* journalist if he had read White General Anton Denikin’s diaries? The journalist replied that he hadn’t. Putin recommended the entries about Ukraine where Denikin had written: ‘No Russian, reactionary or democrat,

republican or authoritarian, will ever allow Ukraine to be torn away' (Plokhy 2017, p.326). A senior Russian official told the *Financial Times* that 'We will not allow Europe and the US to take Ukraine from us' (Belton 2020, p.385). Such views reflected Russia's sense of ownership of Ukraine. Ukraine belongs to 'Holy Rus' and the Russian World which are built around the common values of (Russian) Orthodoxy, Russian language and culture which emerged from the 'first Russian state' of 'Kievan Russia' (Frear and Mazepus 2021, pp.3-4, 16; Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.257). Ukraine has no moral right to ignore its common culture with Russia and cannot choose a future outside the Russian World. Its status and future were determined a thousand years ago and could not be altered.

Russia always defined itself as a great power through its hegemonic control over Eurasia, particularly Ukraine which had the second largest population in the USSR. The Orange Revolution was felt as a personal defeat by Putin because it was viewed through the Soviet lens of a Western conspiracy against Russia. In the conspiracy mindset which permeates security thinking in Putin's Russia, colour revolutions are viewed as Western-orchestrated protests with no room for viewing them as authentic popular protests (Kragh, Andermo and Makashova 2021). After the 2003-2004 Rose and Orange Revolutions and the mass protests in Russia in 2011-2012, Russian leaders became paranoid the West would launch a colour revolution against them and they devised strategies to counter Western nefarious activities.

The first 'critical juncture' took place in response to the Rose and Orange Revolutions and 2004 Beslan school siege by Chechen terrorists, ending in the deaths of 334 people of whom 186 were children (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.176). After the Orange Revolution, 'Ukraine's conflict with Russia and the West's conflict with Russia were tightly bound together' because the Orange Revolution 'changed everything' (D'Anieri 2019, pp.137, 139).

In 2005-2008, Russian nationalism became more strident and assertive, culminating in a 'frenzy of anti-Western Cold War rhetoric' (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.257). This was visible in the transformation of Russian foreign policy through the 'reformulation of Russian national identity in civilizational terms' (Linde 2016, p.611). Pro-Putin youth groups such as the *Molo-*

dezhnoye demokraticheskoye antifashistskoie dvizhenie 'Nashi' (Democratic Anti-Fascist Youth Movement *'Nashi'), Evraziyskij soiuz molodozhi* (Eurasian Youth Union), *Molodezhnoe dvizhenie Rossija Molodaja* (Young Russia Youth movement) and *Molodaia Gvardiia* (Young Guard, the youth movement of the United Russia Party), were created to defend Russia from Western orchestrated colour revolutions. In 2005 a new nationalistic holiday, National Unity Day, was created to celebrate the liberation of Moscow from a Polish-Lithuanian army in the 17th century. *Russia Today* (later renamed *RT)* was launched (Luxmoore 2019).

In February 2006, Surkov presented his concept of 'sovereign democracy' drawing on Slavophile thinking (Kortukov 2020, p.99) and a year later Putin gave a xenophobic speech to the Munich Security Conference.[3] 'Sovereign democracy' opposed Western influences and believed Russia should take its own unique path. 'Sovereign democracy' supported a key plank of White Russian emigres and Eurasianists to free Russia from the pernicious influence of the West.

From 2007-2008, Russia 'moved consistently in the direction of an increased emphasis on Russian culture and civilizational distinctiveness' (Linde 2016, p.624). The Russian World Foundation and *Rossotrudnichestvo* (Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs) were established in 2007 and 2008, respectively, as vehicles to promote Russian language, culture and heritage to compatriots in the former USSR and further afield. Putin began reaching out to White Russian emigres, using the annual Valdai conference to showcase the return of diaspora scholars to Russian heritage (Hill and Gaddy 2015, pp.102-103). The domestic and emigre branches of the Russian Orthodox Church reunited. More than a decade later, the FBI was investigating the *Koordinacionnyj sovet organizacij rossijskih sootechestvennikov Soedinennyh Shtatov Ameriki* (Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots of the US - KSORS) as an organisation established by the Kremlin to promote Russian soft power (Ross 2021).

Already during the first critical juncture, and long before the 2014 crisis, the Kremlin was fanning a hysterical Ukrainophobic campaign which turned the Russian population against Ukrainians. Throughout

Yushchenko's presidency (2005-2010), Russian attitudes to Ukraine and Ukrainians sharply deteriorated and Ukraine became the third most disliked country in Russia after the USA and Georgia. The Levada Centre concluded there was a deliberate campaign in Russia to turn the Russian population against Ukraine. Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of Russians held a negative view of Ukraine.[4] Then Ukrainian Ambassador to Russia Kostyantin Hryshchenko, whose appointment was backed by the pro-Russian Party of Regions, believed 'everyone in Ukraine has been concerned that the attitude of Russians towards Ukrainians has taken a serious turn for the worse and that Russians are forming an impression of Ukraine as an enemy state.'[5]

Russian socialist Boris Kagarlitsky wrote: 'The anti-Russian mood in Ukraine is much weaker than the anti-Ukrainian mood in Russia.'[6] Indeed, Yushchenko never organised an anti-Russian information campaign and during his presidency, 91 percent of Ukrainians continued to hold positive views of Russia. Analysing these polls, the head of the Kyiv-based Center for Military-Political Research summarised Ukraine's relationship with Russia in the headline: 'We like them, but they do not like us.'[7]

The second 'critical juncture' took place in 2011-2013 in response to the EU's Eastern Partnership towards former Soviet republics and widespread anti-Putin protests in Russian cities against election fraud. Putin viewed these protests as a US-orchestrated attempt to undertake a colour revolution in Russia. 'This shift in Putin's assessment became his frame for the crisis in Ukraine at the end of 2013' (Hill and Gaddy 2015, p.358).

Andriy Fert (2020) describes how two strands of thought - 'History of the Ukrainian Church' and 'History of Orthodox in Rus' - competed during this period in the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine. The former was promoted by Metropolitan Volodymyr, the long-time head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine. The competing 'History of Orthodox in Rus' had grown in influence after the creation of the Russian World and election of Kirill as Patriarch in 2009, becoming dominant in 2012-2014 ahead of Volodymyr's death a few months into the 2014 crisis. The complete domination of the 'History of Orthodox in Rus' in the Russian Orthodox Church added to the growing influence of White Russian emigres and their dismissal of the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. As Fert (2020, p.207)

writes, the growing influence of ‘History of Orthodox in Rus’ led to the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine ‘legitimizing its unity with the Russian Orthodox Church.’ The growth of the influence of the ‘History of Orthodox in Rus’ is analysed in seven stages below.

1 *Back to the Future (2005):* Growing influence of Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre great power nationalism and chauvinism on Russian leaders and their attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians.

2 *Reunification (2007):* Creation of the Russian World Foundation and reunification of the two wings of the Russian Orthodox Church.

3 *Slavophile Ideology (2008):* Development of a new concept, ‘Holy Rus.’

4 *Competing Claims (2008-2010):* Russian historiography in the West (see Florinsky 1953; Riasanovsky 1977), Tsarist Russia, Soviet Union and Russian Federation has always monopolised Kyiv Rus as ‘the first Russian state’ (Kuzio 2020, pp.9-35). Historiography in the Ukrainian diaspora and since 1991 in the independent Ukrainian state has described Ukraine as the sole successor to Kyiv Rus (Magocsi 2010, pp.12-24, 55109). The text of Ukraine’s August 1991 Declaration of Independence was based upon ‘the 1,000-year tradition of state development.’ Kyiv Rus leaders Volodymyr the Great and Yaroslav the Wise feature on Ukraine’s *hryvnya* currency notes and Ukraine’s national symbol is the Kyiv Rus *tryzyb* (trident). Russia uses neither. President Yushchenko (2008), a supporter of Ukrainian Orthodox autocephaly, made the 988 Christianisation of ‘Kyiv Rus-Ukraine’ a state anniversary. The election of Kirill in 2009 as Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church and his integration of a religious component into the Russian World influenced the issuing of a Russian decree making the Christianisation of Rus a state holiday (Medvedev 2010). The two holidays were supported by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarch and Russian Orthodox Churches, respectively. Compare and contrast the Ukrainian and Russian presidential decrees: (Yushchenko 2008): ‘About the Day of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus -Ukraine,’

Given the importance of Orthodox traditions in the history and development of Ukrainian society, in support of the initiative of the National Council for Culture and Spirituality, the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, the Ukrainian

Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and the public

To establish in Ukraine the Day of the Baptism of Kyivan Rus -Ukraine, which is celebrated annually on 28 July in remembrance of the Holy Apostolic Prince Volodymyr - the Baptist of Kyivan Rus.'

(Medvedev 2010): 'In the Orthodox Church calendar, 28 July (according to the old calendar, 15 July) is the Day of Remembrance of the Equal-to-the-Apostles Grand Prince Vladimir, the Baptist of Russia.

This federal law is aimed at legal recognition of a memorable date of an important historical event which had a significant impact on the social, spiritual and cultural development of the peoples of Russia and on the strengthening of Russian statehood.'

5 *New-Old Imperialism (2008-2012):* Putin coming to view himself as the Russian leader who would 'gather the Russian lands,' the most important of which was Ukraine.

6 *Civilisation Discourse (2012-2014):* Following Putin's election there was an 'elevation of the civilization approach in Russian political discourse to the status of official doctrine' (Linde 2016, p.624). Increased emphasis on 'civilizational nationalism' (Verkhovskii and Pain 2012) deepened Russian views of Ukraine as a 'Russian land.'

7 *Ukrainian Autocephaly (2018-2019):* An emergency session of the Russian Security Council was called in response to the granting of auto-cephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine leading to a schism between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I. Constantinople returned Ukraine to its canonical control. The Russian Orthodox Church could no longer claim Ukraine as its canonical territory and its understanding of 'Holy Rus' no longer counted Ukraine as a member.

These seven developments moved Russian great power nationalism even further to the right before and after Putin's return to the presidency in 2012. The first impact was unprecedented Kremlin pressure on Armenia and

Ukraine not to sign their Association Agreements with the EU. Russian pressure was successful in the case of Armenia but provoked the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine.

During Putin's third and fourth terms in office in 2012-2018, a conspiratorial worldview became more entrenched in his regime's nationalism, basis of social cohesion and popular mobilisation. These developments provided legitimacy for greater authoritarianism and exploitation of public nostalgia for Russia as a great power (Kragh, Andermo and Makashova 2021). Greenfeld (1993, p.261) described 'Russian nationalism' as 'ethnic, collectivist, and authoritarian.'

A return to White Russian emigre great power nationalism became evident in more extreme views of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Zygar (2016, p.87) pointed out how in the USSR there had been a Ukrainian lobby in Moscow but under Putin this had disappeared. The Soviet policy of respecting a Ukrainian SSR and Ukrainians and Russians as close but separate peoples was replaced in Putin's Russia by the denial of the very existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. In the USSR, Ukraine and the Ukrainian language 'always had robust defenders at the very top' but under Putin, 'the idea of Ukrainian national statehood was discouraged' (Zygar 2016, p.87).

Tolz (2002, p.244) had forewarned of the replacement of Soviet by Tsarist historical myths where a 'majority of Russians are still looking at Ukraine through the prism of the pre-revolutionary perception of Ukraine as part of the pan-Russian nationality.' Writing much later, Plokhy (2017, p.303) had also warned the Russian nation 'was deeply rooted in the prerevolutionary past.' Russian nationalist thinkers had always defined the Russian people as encompassing Ukrainians and Belarusians which 'resembled the imperial ideal of a big Russian nation' (Plokhy 2017, pp.303-304). Putin returned to Tsarist Russian nationalist roots.

Tsarist imperialists and White Russian emigres return home

The 'red-brown' coalition's coup d'etat in 1993 was physically defeated by Russian tanks and imprisonment. Nevertheless, its model of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians as parts of a pan-Russian nation germinated in

the second half of the 1990s and became hegemonic in Putin's first decade in power.

Ideas and ideologies in reprinted historical works from the Tsarist era glorified Russian imperialism and included Ukrainians and Belarusians within a pan-Russian nation. These historical works became popular in postSoviet Russia from the late 1980s and in Russia in the 1990s. White Russian emigres were dominated by anti-democratic reactionaries, chauvinists and imperialists and democratically inclined Russian dissidents only began joining the emigration in the late 1970s (see Plyushch and Belotserkovskyj 1976; Alexeyeva 1985, pp.431-448).

The emigre Russian Orthodox Church was as reactionary as its domestic counterpart towards a separate Ukrainian identity. Plokhy (2017, p.330) described the Russian Orthodox Church as the 'watchdog of all-Russian unity.' The hierarchs of both wings of the Russian Orthodox Church were dominated by Ukrainophobes and Russian chauvinists who believed Ukrainians and Belarusians are branches of a pan-Russian nation. Both wings of the Russian Orthodox Church used antiquated terms such as 'Kyiv, the Mother of Russian cities' and 'Holy Rus' and were adamant Ukraine belonged to the Russian World (Russian Information Campaign Against Ukraine State and Defence Forces 2016, p.19).

Ties between the Soviet regime and White emigres had always existed in different forms. Indeed, the very concept of emigre compatriots who would advance the interests of Russia abroad 'directly evoked KGB terminology' (Soldatov and Borogan 2019, pp.177). Laqueur (1993, pp.81-83) details longterm Soviet penetration of Russian nationalist emigres.

Some of the children of White Russian emigres had ties to the KGB since their recruitment in the 1980s when they became useful for laundering Soviet Communist Party assets. After 1991, this expertise was expanded to the billions stolen from the Russian state. Some of the funds would continue to be used in active measures against the West which encompassed information warfare and disinformation, cyber-attacks, hacking, assassinations, coup attempts and buying extreme right- and left-wing politicians and extremist groups (Belton 2020, pp.326-328). 'Black cash'

was used to fund anti-EU extreme left and populist nationalist forces in Europe and the USA (see Shekhovtsov 2018).

Rehabilitation of White Russian emigres began nearly two decades before Putin's first election in the early 1980s in the Soviet media, not coincidentally under former KGB Chairperson Andropov. Soviet cinema began to talk sympathetically of the White movement and less favourably of the 'Reds' (Bolsheviks) during the Russian civil war. The 'Reds' appeared not as heroes but as 'figures of fun' and 'obscene jokes' (Voznesenskaya 1984). Meanwhile, 'Our hearts, our sympathies are on the side of the Whites' because 'White officers are increasingly becoming models of honour and nobility for us' and 'We regret that you were not victorious' (Voznesenskaya 1984).

Glasnost and the opening up of 'blank spots' in Russian history in the Gorbachev era, the collapse of communism and the creation of an independent Russian state provided the vacuum for the inflow of White Russian emigre ideologies, including Eurasianism, ideas and historiography. Similar to the fusion of nationalism and Bolshevism under Stalin (Andreyev 1989, p.175), proponents of Eurasianism grew among Russian nationalists, who were opposed to a European Russian identity, believed Russia's destiny is to create a unique civilisation in Eurasia that was in a state of permanent conflict with the West whose values are 'decadent' and in decline (Andreyev 1989, pp.175-177). Eurasianism provided the ideological grist for Russia's *siloviki* to continue Soviet era active measures against the West, including its puppet states, such as Ukraine in Eurasia.

White Russian emigres and Eurasianists and great power nationalists in Russia opposed the import of Western values, such as liberal democracy, providing ideological legitimisation for Putin's authoritarian system (Laqueur 1993, pp.81-83; Barbashin and Thoburn 2015). White Russian emigre writer Ivan Ilyin believed democracy was impossible in a large country such as Russia which could only be ruled by a 'national dictatorship' (Barbashin and Thoburn 2015). White Russian emigre dislike of Western democracy was useful for Putin's consolidation of an authoritarian regime and these views were given a tremendous amount of

air time on Russian television (Barbashin and Thoburn 2015; Hutchings and Tolz 2015).

White Russian emigre views and Eurasianism moved from the margins of Russian political life under Yeltsin into Russian official policy under Putin. From 2005, Putin supported the rehabilitation of White emigre writers and military officers and their re-burial in Russia. Putin drew closer to the views of White emigres and former dissident nationalists, such as Solzhenitsyn who had returned to live in Russia. Robert Horvath (2011) was not alone in wondering whether the former dissident Solzhenitsyn had become an 'apologist' for a regime led by a former KGB officer. In 2007, a year before he died, Solzhenitsyn received the Russian Federation National Award for his work.

Solzhenitsyn's (1991) concept of a 'Russian Union' had been presented as an alternative to the then-disintegrating USSR. During the 2014 crisis, Robert Coalson (2014) asked if Putin was implementing Solzhenitsyn's Russian Union in his policies towards Ukraine. By 2014, Putin's regime had integrated the values of Tsar Nicholas I imperial nationalism and White Russian emigres. Ivan Krastev (2014) writes: 'It is Putin the conservative and not Putin the realist who decided to violate Ukraine's sovereignty. His march into Crimea is not realpolitik it is kultur kampf. '

From 2005, Putin's regime was increasingly 'relying on the writings of Russia's imperial Orthodox past' (Belton 2020, p.260) which were incorporated into a 'new Putin ideology' (Zygar 2016, pp.292-294; Snyder 2018). The reburial of White Russian emigres was personally supervised by Putin as a healing of the wounds of Russia's past history (Hill and Gaddy 2015, 101). As Plokhy (2017, p.327) writes, 'Russia was taking back its long-lost children and reconnecting with their ideas.' Russia became the defender of 'conservative' and 'traditional' values against a 'decadent' West which was undermining the sovereignty of the nation-state, supporting multiculturalism and promoting LGBT rights in *Gayropa* (Foxall 2017). As Andrew Wilson (2014, p.36) described the extreme anti-Western xenophobia following Putin's 2012 election, 'They are pathologies. Put them together with the humiliation myth and you have a sociopathic state.'

The Russian ‘sociopathic state’ invaded and annexed Crimea and launched military aggression against Ukraine in 2014.

The most important influence of White Russian emigres came from Ilyin whose articles and books were already available in the Gorbachev era when they had become ‘more widely republished by the Russian right under glas-nost than those of any other emigre thinker’ (Laqueur 1993, p.84). Ilyin’s thoughts germinated in 1990s Russia and in the 2000s moved from the margins into the centre of political life through Putin’s rehabilitation of White Russian emigres. Ilyin’s remains, together with another emigre writer, Ivan Shmelev, were reburied in Russia in 2005 (Zygar 2016, p.249).

Putin - despite Ilyin’s controversial praise for Italian, Spanish and Portuguese fascism - was ‘particularly impressed’ with his writings. Putin first cited Ilyin in his 2005 state of the nation address, a move showing him ‘building a bridge to its imperial past’ (Belton 2020, p.272). Ilyin had become President Putin’s favourite author (Barbashin and Thoburn 2015; Snyder 2018). Ilyin was ‘beloved by Putin,’ Surkov, Medvedev, KPRF, LDPR, and the Russian Orthodox Church (Snyder 2018; Soldatov and Borogan 2019, p.297). In the 1990s the ‘red-brown’ coalition came to adore Ilyin which helped them in the 2000s to expand their political base into a ‘red-white-brown’ coalition. Ilyin was cited and showcased on the 100th anniversary of the 1917 revolution in Russian television programmes praising the Tsarist Russian Empire (Chat-terje-Doody and Tolz 2020, pp.10-11). Laruelle (2016, p. 62) writes: ‘Positive memories of Russia’s Tsarist past are thus experiencing an unprecedented boost from the “New Russia” mythmaking process.’

Ilyin, as with all White Russian emigres, denies the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians (Snyder 2018). Ilyin’s ‘organic model’ of Russians and Ukrainians as branches of a pan-Russian nation was the dominant view among White Russian emigres and has become integrated into the discourse used by Putin and Russian officials. Speaking at the annual Valdai conference, Putin (2017) described Russians and Ukrainians as ‘if not just one nation, part of the Russian nation.’

The influence of White Russian emigres was visible in Putin’s reading of White General Denikin who died in 1947 in the USA and was reburied in

2005 in Russia. Denikin is a negative figure in Ukrainian history because of his brutal repression of pro-Ukrainian Cossacks in the Kuban region of northern Caucasus and his brief occupation of Kyiv in 1919 when Ukrainian-language schools were closed and Ukrainian language signs were replaced by Russian (Plokhy 2017, pp.326-328). Denikin believed Ukraine did not exist; there was 'Little Russia' and he only supported the teaching of the 'Little Russian' dialect in elementary schools.

Ilyin viewed the very concept of an independent Ukraine as Western 'Russophobia' designed to divide, weaken and undermine Russia as a great power. This conspiratorial view of a Western hand seeking to split the panRussian nation was an article of faith among White Russian emigres and is upheld by Putin and other Russian leaders. White Russian emigres blamed Swedes, Poles, Austrians and Lenin for creating a 'fictitious' Ukrainian people which Putin agreed with (see the beginning of this chapter). These chauvinistic views of a Ukrainian people dreamt up by Western conspiracies to weaken 'Russia' have become part of the discourse of Putin's regime (Kuzio 2020, pp.97-99).

White Russian emigres and nationalism in Putin's Russia

The children of White emigres who had fled Bolshevik Russia became Putin's political allies in his quest to rebuild Russia as a great power, take on the West, limit Western influence in Russian life and re-integrate Ukraine into the Russian World. White Russian emigres assisted Putin 'on a mission to restore Russia's global position following the Soviet collapse' (Belton 2020, p.329).

2007 witnessed the launch of both the Russian World Foundation and the reunification of the domestic and emigre Russian Orthodox Churches. The unification of the Russian Orthodox Churches brought White Russian emigre and extreme nationalistic views into Russian politics. As if the domestic Russian Orthodox Church had not already been nationalistic and xenophobic enough, reunification put these traits of Putin's regime on steroids. The emigre Russian Orthodox Church had close relations with NTS and held extreme pre-Soviet Russian nationalist views (Laqueur 1993, pp.50-55) which had been frozen in time; that is, they continued to adhere

to Tsarist views of a pan-Russian nation. Following reunification, and the election of Kirill as Russian Patriarch in 2009, the united Russian Orthodox Church was in position to promote the further integration of White Russian emigre chauvinistic views with existing nationalistic thinking on Russia's place in Eurasia, Russian-Ukrainian relations and the Western world.

White Russian emigres played a central role in assisting the unification of the two wings of the Russian Orthodox Church (Soldatov and Borogan 2019, pp.4-5). White Russian emigres, such as Alexei Jordan, enabled the 2007 reunification of Russia's Orthodox Churches (Soldatov and Borogan 2019, p.208) and the 2015 re-burial in Russia of the remains of Grand Duke Nikolai Vladimir and his wife Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna. During the reburial ceremony Patriarch Kirill said:

We are present at a symbolic act - a once fractured country and people have found the strength to come together, to overcome historic differences and to unite in earnest. The reestablishment of canonical unity within the Local Russian Orthodox Church bears witness to this.

It is remarkable that this is taking place on the 70th anniversary of the victory over fascist Germany, and what happened between 1941 and 1945 is connected directly to the events of World War I.

What we do now, today, is in part a symbolic act of overcoming the chaos, the division which our people suffered last century.[8]

Taken together the evolution of Russian great power nationalism, reunification of Russian Orthodoxy and return of White Russian emigres influenced the evolution of Putin to think of himself as the 'gatherer of Russian lands.' The first sign of this was Putin's (2008) speech to the NATO-Russia Council which described Ukraine as a 'fragile' country with territories populated by 'Russians' wrongly included within it. Only a year later, Russian foreign policy analyst Karaganov (2009) said 'justice would be restored' by the return of these 'Russian' lands. Putin's discourse on an 'artificial' Ukraine (from 2008) and 'New Russia' (from 2014) sent signals to Russian nationalists that Ukraine's territorial integrity was not recognised if it continued to align itself with the West 'against Russia' (Putin 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b, 2017, 2020a, 2020b). The trickle-down effect of this

discourse could be seen with a Moscow Dynamo ‘ultra’ football fan who said on the eve of the 2014 crisis, ‘We need to restore our power, occupy our lost lands, grab Crimea from Ukraine’ (Pomerantsev 2014, p.195). These ‘lost lands’ referred to Ukraine.

In 2010, Putin responded to the EU’s launch of its Eastern Partnership with his Eurasian alternative, the CIS Customs Union which in 2015 would become the Eurasian Economic Union. In 2012-2013, Putin proceeded with his plan to ‘gather Russian lands’ by exerting pressure on Yanukovych to turn away from the EU Association Agreement. Putin began to look upon the EU in the same negative manner Russia had always looked at NATO. Although the EU was not offering membership, the Eastern Partnership’s enlargement into Eurasia infringed what Russia believed was its exclusive sphere of influence.

White Russian emigre nationalism and the 2014 Ukraine crisis

By the 2014 crisis, nearly a decade of nostalgia, rehabilitation and reintegration of White Russian emigre writers and military leaders had come to strongly influence the development of Russian great power nationalism and hardening of Russian chauvinistic views of Ukraine and Ukrainians. It would be not surprising if these developments did not influence Putin's more aggressive approach to Ukraine after he was re-elected as President in 2012. Russia's goal in pressuring and then successfully bribing Yanukovych to turn away from the EU Association Agreement was undertaken with a view to his re-election in 2015 and him taking Ukraine into the Eurasian Economic Union. The 'gathering of Russian lands' would have been accomplished, but Putin cannot accept that Ukraine will never be a second Belarus.

In the 2014 crisis, the Russian appeal to the 'restoration of historical justice' was 'in essence a form of revanchism' (Allison 2014, pp.1285-1286). Russian nationalism was an amalgam of ethnic, language, cultural and historic rights dismissive of the existence of a Ukrainian nation and formulated in a 'political ideology endorsed by Putin himself' (Allison 2014, p.1287). The Russian imperial and ethnic nationalism which converged in the 2014 crisis (Kolsto and Blakkisrud 2016, p.6) was a product of outdated historical myths and stereotypes of Ukrainians by White Russian emigres which had been literally resurrected from the dead by Putin's regime.

In the decade leading up to the 2014 crisis the Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre dismissal of a separate Ukrainian nation had become accepted by most Russian political groups (Kuzio 2017, pp.33-84). Russian Orthodox oligarchs, such as Konstantin Malofeev and their political allies were in full agreement with White Russian emigres about Ukrainians constituting one of the three branches of a pan-Russian nation. Malofeev said: 'Ukraine is part of Russia. It is an artificial creation on the ruins of the empire' (Belton 2020, p.427).[9] Malofeev, echoing long-standing Russian great power nationalist views stretching back half a century to Solzhenitsyn, said the inhabitants of south-eastern Ukraine have 'always been Russian.

They've been Russian forever' (Belton 2020, p.427). Surkov (2020), Malofeev's ally in the 'New Russia' project and the creation of Russian DNR and LNR proxies, was in full agreement about the 'artificiality' of Ukraine. 'Little Russian separatism,' the Russian newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* wrote, had dreamt up 'Ukraine as a sovereign country' which is 'based on a mythologised lie.'[10]

In 2014, the influence of White Russian emigres on Russian thinking and military aggression could be found on Russian television and in parliament, the presidential administration and *siloviki.* On the eve of Russia's invasion of Crimea, senior Russian officials and governors were sent copies of Ilyin's work, *Nashi Zadachi* (Our Tasks), to study. Snyder (2018) believes the source of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine is to be found in Ilyin's views of how Ukrainians are a branch of the pan-Russian nation: 'Since 2012, Russian policy towards Ukraine has been made on the basis of first principles, and those policies have been Ilyin's.' Plokhy (2017, p.341) broadened this influence from White Russian emigres to Tsarist intellectuals: 'In 2014, Putin brought about the reincarnation of (Petr) Struve's ideas at the highest levels of Russian politics.' Struve began his political life as a Marxist, then became a liberal and after the Bolshevik Revolution joined the Whites. Struve's three different political stances all viewed Ukrainians as a branch of the pan-Russian nation.

Putin's domestic allies in his quest to 'gather Russian lands' were 'Orthodox oligarchs' Vladimir Yakunin and Malofeev. Malofeev's St. Vasily the Great Foundation funded Russian projects nostalgic for the Tsarist Empire and which cooperated with White Russian emigres. 'Former' Russian intelligence officer Girkin, who had led a group of Russian *spetsnaz* from occupied Crimea into eastern Ukraine in April 2014, had been head of security at Malofeev's Marshall Capital Partners (Clover 2016, pp.325-326). In the 2014 crisis in Ukraine, Girkin and Borodai worked 'under the protective umbrella' of Malofeev 'who has never hidden his monarchist convictions and involvement in the Ukrainian crisis' (Laruelle 2019, p.721). When not undertaking mercenary work abroad, Girkin liked to play act as a White officer in re-enactments of Russian civil war battles.

Cossack companies and White Guard nationalist units fought against Ukraine in the Donbas, such as the Russian Orthodox Army (Vasylenko, Kabakayev, Alekseyeva and Morozov 2020, pp.81-85). In May 2016, Girkin was a co-founder of the Russian National Movement with the goal of the reunification of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus and 'other Russian lands' into a single union. Girkin's support for a Russian Union was similar to that proposed decades earlier by Solzhenytsyn. Malofeev's business empire and media group *Tsargrad* provide resources to the Union of Donbas Volunteers (Hurska 2020).

Belton (2020, p.427) believes Malofeev's ties to Soviet and Russian intelligence services could be deduced from his telecoms business which in the USSR and post-Soviet era had always been closely tied to the GRU. Mal-ofeev was a key figure in supplying 'black cash' to Russia's 2014 hybrid warfare operations in Ukraine using Soviet tactics of proxies, agents of influence and front organisations (Belton 2020, pp.428, 442). 'Black cash' made Russia's intervention in Ukraine deniable in a replay of traditional Soviet *maskirovka* (military deception) (Belton 2020, pp.425-428).

The SVR-controlled Russian Institute of Strategic Research provided intellectual backing in support of the growth of Orthodox-Monarchist nationalism in the years leading up to the 2014 crisis. Director Leonid Reshetnikov, a retired lieutenant general of the SVR, and head of its Ukrainian department Tamara Guzenkova, are Orthodox-monarchist nationalists, Russian chauvinists and Ukrainophobes (Sytyn 2015). The Russian Institute of Strategic Research believed that 'there is no Ukraine, only Little Russia' because Ukraine is an artificial entity and failed state. Funded in part by Malofeev, the Russian Institute of Strategic Research prepared strategy documents during and after the Euromaidan Revolution. One leaked document called for the annexation of Crimea and what it called 'eastern Ukraine' that it defined as 'Kharkiv, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhye, Mykolayev, Dnipropetrovsk and to a lesser extent Kherson and Odessa regions.'[11] Accusing the Bolshevik leaders of working for the Germans when the USSR was founded, Reshetnikov said:

We are reaping the fruits of the bomb planted by Lenin under our statehood, about which V. Putin spoke. The Soviet government created a geopolitical monster in the primordially Russian territories in Ukraine. This was carried out by the special services of Kaiser Germany and the Bolsheviks Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky. They created Ukraine by cutting off from Russia the Russian cities of Kharkiv (founded by Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich), Donetsk (founded by Emperor Alexander II), and Mykolayiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa (all three founded by Empress Catherine II). And Khrushchev also gave them Crimea. What does Ukraine have to do with it [Crimea]? She was needed for one purpose and that is to become an anti-Russia [country]. And while the Little Russian brothers do not cease to be zombie monsters, their new masters, the United States, will be ready to fight to the last Ukrainian.[12]

Soldatov and Borogan (2019, p.218) write that Putin's 'imperial message' was received enthusiastically by White Russian emigres who rallied to Putin's banner of the 'gathering of Russian lands.' The influence of White Russian emigres was evident in Putin speaking 'a lot with them' (Belton 2020, p.422). During the 2014 crisis 100 'princes, counts, and others whose names ranked among the most storied in tsarist Russia—Tolstoy, Pushkin, Sheremetev' signed a 'Solidarity with Russia' open letter officially penned by Prince Dmitry Shakhovskoi (Feifer 2015). The open letter, which condemned 'pro-

Nazi military groups' for killing eastern Ukrainians, drew heavily on Kremlin disinformation pointing to it having been most likely drafted in Moscow (Feifer 2015; Soldatov and Borogan 2019, p.265). The newspaper *Komso-molskaya Pravda* published an article with the headline 'White Russian Emigres Support Mother Russia Again,' writing: 'For the first time since 1941-45, White Russia and Red Russia, past Russia and God willing, future Russia have met' (Feifer 2015). *Komsomolskaya Pravda* had given official notice of the existence of a 'red-white-brown' coalition.

In the 2014 crisis, Orthodox fundamentalists joined the 'red-brown' coalition which had launched the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d'etat, expanding it to a 'red-white-brown' coalition (Laruelle 2016). White supporters combined ultra-conservatism, monarchism, anti-Semitism, and

imperialism. On the extreme right the ‘brown’ intervention into Ukraine was led by the neo-Nazi RNE, a party which had been banned for supporting the 1993 coup d’etat (Shekhovtsov 2014).

On the extreme left, there were national Bolsheviks, such as the antiSemitic Glazyev (2019), a leading member of the Motherland Party when it had been founded in 2003 and received financial support from Malofeev (Hurska 2020). As early as in autumn 2014, Just Russia, a national Bolshevik satellite party of Putin’s United Russia and successor to the Motherland Party, had supported ‘declarations of independence’ by the DNR and the LNR followed by referendums and their incorporation into Russia (Eastern Human Rights Group 2021). Believing the DNR and the LNR had always been part of the Russian World, the Just Russia Party supported the distribution of passports and the right of DNR and LNR citizens to vote in the July 2020 constitutional referendum and September 2021 State Duma elections.

Conclusions

During Putin’s presidency, Russian nationalism revived its Tsarist imperial and White emigre roots during two critical junctures in 2005-2007 and 2011-2012. The transformation of Russian nationalism was brought about by, amongst others, the reburial of White emigre political and military leaders, diffusion and acceptance of their writings, creation of the Russian World, and unification of the emigre and domestic branches of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre thinking had a profound influence upon Russian nationalist discourse towards Ukraine, Eurasia and the West. Putin and Russian leaders became more obsessed with viewing Ukraine as an ‘artificial’ state and puppet of the West and Ukrainians as a branch of the pan-Russian nation. The seeds of the 2014 crisis, Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea and ongoing military aggression against Ukraine lie in the radicalisation of Russian nationalism under Putin which led him to take unprecedented action against Ukraine and bring about the biggest crisis in Europe since 1945.

Notes

1 Said a day before Ukraine's annual Independence Day celebrations. *Itar-Tass*, 23 August 2001.

2 *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 14 January 1992.

3 https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/12/AR20070212 00555.html.

4 http://www.levada.ru.

5 *UNIAN*, 16 May 2009 and *Profil*, no.22, 6 June 2009.

6 *Moscow Times*, 29 May 2008.

7 *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 5 May 2009.

8 http://www.spc.rs/eng/reburial_remains_grand_duke_nikolai_nikolaevich_and_his_wife.

9 Ilya Arkhipov, Irina Reznik, and Henry Meyer, 'Putin's "Soros" Dreams of Empire as Allies Wage Ukraine Revolt,' *Bloomberg*, 15 June 2014. https://www. bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-06-15/putin-s-soros-dreams-of-empire-as-allies -wage-ukraine-revolt.

10 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/the-idea-of-ukraine-is-based-on-a-mythologised-lie.

11 *Novaya Gazeta*, 24 February 2015. English translation at: https://www.interp retermag.com/it-is-seen-as-correct-to-initiate-the-annexation-of-the-eastern-region s-of-ukraine-to-russia.

12 https://web.archive.org/web/20190711144157/http://www.aif.ru/politics/wo

rld/leoni d_reshetnikov_ssha_visyat_na_voloske.

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Part III: Russian Nationalism versus Ukraine

6 Democrats and the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition

We should clean up Ukraine from the idiots. The genocide of these cretins is due and inevitable...I can’t believe these are Ukrainians. Ukrainians are wonderful Slavonic people. And this is a race of bastards that emerged from the sewer manholes. I think we need to kill, kill, and kill (Ukrainians). Further negotiations should be not attempted.

Aleksandr Dugin 2014[1]

As earlier chapters have discussed, liberal political forces in the Russian emigre community and within the dissident movement in the USSR were weak. In the late Soviet and early post-Soviet era, post-imperial, liberal Russian movements were fragmented and influential for no more than three years but by 1993-1994 they were in retreat. A Russian *Natsdems* (national democratic) political constituency, which has been influential in Ukraine and other non-Russian republics since the 1960s and 1970s, is still a work in progress. National democrats, who occupy a strategic position in the political spectrum between liberal centrists and radical nationalists and neo-Nazis, combine demands for national and human rights. National democrats called for independence for Ukraine and other non-Russian republics in the USSR. National democracy was an oxymoron in Russia because the Soviet state supported the Russian language and promoted Russification, Russian culture, and a Russo-centric historiography. Meanwhile, no Russian political forces sought independence from the USSR. There was therefore no rationale for the existence of *Natsdems* in Russia.

In the 1990s a ‘red-brown’ coalition twice attempted to launch hard-line coups d’etat in 1991 and 1993. Although both failed, they nevertheless came to power under Putin who broadened their coalition to ‘red-white-brown’ by integrating Tsarist imperial and White Russian emigre great power nationalism (see Chapter 5). In the 2000s the coalition moved from the margins of Russian political life to centre stage and after 2012, assisted

Putin's 'gathering of Russian lands.' 'Red' national Bolsheviks and Eurasianists, 'White' black hundreds, and 'Brown' blackshirts came from different places on the political spectrum but nevertheless agreed on Russian policies towards Ukraine, Eurasia and the West. The 'red-white-brown' coalition were more willing to use hard power to achieve hegemony over Ukraine which they always viewed as an 'artificial' state and a 'Russian land' (with the exception of its western region) and Ukrainians as one of three branches of the panRussian nation.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section analyses 'democrats'; that is, the liberal and national democratic constituency in Russian politics. The second section analyses the different political components of the 'red-white-brown' coalition.

Democrats

Liberals

Ukrainians were on the whole right to believe that Russian liberalism ended on the Ukrainian border. Russians have never understood or devoted time to nationality problems in the Tsarist Russian Empire and the USSR. Russia has a very small number of experts and scholars who have an understanding of the internal dynamics of contemporary Ukraine as opposed to seeing their neighbour through White Russian and Soviet stereotypes and myths. Ukrainian national concerns have never been comprehended by Russian political leaders and most Russian intellectuals.

Russian liberals and nationalists in the 19th century both mocked the Ukrainian language and culture (Plokhy 2017, pp.115, 128, 137-140, 166—167). In the Tsarist Empire, even liberals such as Struve did not recognise Ukraine as a country and Ukrainians as a separate people. Struve supported the banning of Ukrainian, the only language to be banned in the Tsarist Empire, in 1863 with the Valuev Circular and in 1876 through Alexander II's Ems decree. Russian liberal Vissarion Belinsky, 'had always regarded the Little Russian project with suspicion' (Plokhy 2017, p.115). During the Russian civil war, liberal opponents of Tsarism did not support autonomy or independence for Ukraine (Procyk 1995). Liberal political parties, such as

the *Kadets* who supported the provisional government were opposed even to granting Ukraine autonomy (let alone independence) because they were uncomfortable with a Ukrainian identity separate to Russia (Procyk 1995).

Russian liberal emigres were far outnumbered by great power nationalist, fascist, Eurasianist and imperialist groups. In the USSR, Russian liberals preferred a transformed 'democratised' USSR with republics receiving greater sovereignty over its breakup into independent states. Following the spring 1991 referendum, Russian liberals backed Gorbachev's transformation of the USSR into a Union of Sovereign States with the Soviet federation becoming a confederation.

As Chapter 4 shows, Russian liberalism went into retreat in 1993—1994 and in the second half of the 1990s, with no national democratic constituency, Russian politics came to be dominated by the 'red-brown' coalition of great power nationalists. From the mid-1990s, Russian liberals 'borrowed heavily' from nationalists and 'used it to ride to power' (Beissinger 2002, p.401). Some Russian liberals, most national democrats and the 'red-white-brown' coalition, believed that Ukraine belonged within Russia's sphere of influence, never accepted that Crimea was part of Ukraine and believed that Sevastopol was a 'Russian port.' In the 1990s, Russian liberals Nemtsov and Yavlinsky both believed Sevastopol was historically a Russian city.[2]

The entire Russian political spectrum believes Ukrainians want to remain close to Russia and be part of the Russian World but are prevented from doing so by Russophobic western Ukrainians and their Western puppet masters. In the 1990s even Russian liberal newspapers wrote of Ukrainian elites acting against the interests of the Ukrainian people, discussing alleged discrimination of Russian speakers in Ukraine in an alarmist manner and deriding Ukrainian national symbols (Tolz 2001, pp.209-234).

Russian liberals and most national democrats never proposed using hard power to maintain Ukraine within Russia's orbit; nevertheless, they did propose the use of soft power. Governor of Nizhni Novgorod Nemtsov proposed that Russia use 'banks not tanks' to expand Russian economic influence into Crimea, 'beginning with Sevastopol' with the goal of turning the port 'into a Russian city de facto' (D'Anieri 1999, p.211). This should

be followed, Nemtsov believed, by Russian economic expansion into Ukraine which would lead to the 'integration and unification of former Soviet republics becoming inevitable.'[3] Instead of focusing on building a civic nation-state within the 'imagined community' of the borders of the Russian Federation, Russian liberals spent their time in competition with great power nationalists drafting proposals for the re-integration of the former Soviet republics.

Laruelle (2009, p.3) argues that no Russian public figure 'is able to acquire political legitimacy without justifying his or her policy in terms of the nation's supreme interest.' While true this did not prevent Navalny from adopting Nemtsov's critical stance towards Putin's annexation of Crimea and military aggression against Ukraine later in the 2000s. Nemtsov politically transformed in response to the growing authoritarianism of Putin's presidency and the Orange and Euromaidan Revolutions. He was the most vocal Russian liberal who condemned Russian military aggression and unequivocally condemned the annexation of Crimea. Navalny supported Crimea's annexation and largely ignores ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Although Navalny's imprisonment in 2021 possibly made it difficult for him to condemn Russia's increased military presence on Ukraine's border, in April of that year his team smuggled out statements from his confinement on other issues. Nemtsov's assassination in February 2015 could very well have been due to his active work exposing Russian military intervention in eastern Ukraine.[4] Navalny has not produced anything remotely similar to Nemtsov's detailed report *Putin. War* and has shown no understanding of the roots of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Laruelle (2019a, p.190) downplays Navalny's Russian nationalism, writing that he accepted Crimea's annexation because it had already been undertaken and he allegedly opposed the war in the Donbas. Her claims are highly debateable and do not hold up when comparing Nemtsov and Navalny. Instead of condemning Russian military aggression against Ukraine, Navalny complained about Putin losing influence over the country and, in so doing, implicitly endorsed Ukraine's place within the Russian World (Dickinson 2021). Navalny has never attempted to follow in

Nemtsov's footsteps by trying to understand the drivers of Ukraine and why these show the country is not a 'Russian' land.

Nemtsov (2016) lamented the 'fratricidal war' between Russia and Ukraine, which was commendable but a poor choice of words (see Chapter 7). Nemtsov (2014) unequivocally condemned the annexation of Crimea which he viewed as an integral part of Ukraine. Nemtsov (2016) believed Putin was punishing Ukraine because he was scared of a similar colour revolution engulfing Russia:

Ukraine became an example of an anti-criminal revolution, which overthrew a thieving president. Oh, so you dared to go out onto the street and throw off a president? Ukraine needs to be punished for it to make sure that no Russian would entertain these thoughts. Moreover, Ukraine chose the European way, which implies the rule of law, democracy and change of power. Ukraine's success on this path is a direct threat to Putin's power because he chose the opposite course - a lifetime in power, filled with arbitrariness and corruption.

The Free Russia Forum, created by liberal opposition leaders Garry Kasparov and Ivan Tyutrinin in 2016, joined Nemtsov in condemning Russian military aggression. In May 2017, at its third meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania, it issued the following statement:

The Kremlin's war against Ukraine violates the territorial integrity of Ukraine, the UN Charter, the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Declaration on the Establishment of the CIS, the Budapest Memorandum, bilateral Russian-Ukrainian treaties, the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and falls within the definition of aggression given by the UN General Assembly...The occupation and annexation of Ukrainian territory, accompanied by massive repressions against Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians, which claimed more than ten thousand lives, have become shameful spots in Russian history. The war must end immediately, Russian troops must be withdrawn from all over Ukraine, including Crimea and Donbas, and the internationally recognised Russian-Ukrainian border must be restored. The future free Russia will strive to establish good-neighbourly relations with Ukraine based on the principles of international law.[5]

Nemtsov and the Free Russia Forum unequivocally condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea and its military aggression against Ukraine - steps that Navalny has never taken. Navalny and *Yabloko*, a party which had ironically expelled him, did not support Putin's use of military means to annex Crimea but at the same time believed the peninsula had a right to 'selfdetermination' (Bacon 2015, p.34). It is highly doubtful that they believe Russia's regions - Chechnya, Kalingrad, Kurile Islands, Tatarstan, Kalmykia and the Ukrainian Cossack settled region of Kuban - also have a right to 'self-determination.' Presumably 'self-determination' is only applicable to regions in other countries - Georgia (Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh), Moldova (Transnistria) and Ukraine (Crimea). As discussed in the Preface, the origins of this duplicitous position lie in Soviet rejection of independence for its non-Russian republics while supporting the 'self-determination' of Western colonies from Western empires. The UN definition of 'self-determination' has always been applicable to countries and never to regions such as Nigeria's Biafra or Ukraine's Crimea.

National democrats

The creation of Russian national democracy is a drawn-out project with an uncertain destiny. Russian national democrats have little in common with their non-Russian counterparts who fought Soviet power and remained in politics in their independent nation-states. Navalny's 'normal nationalism' in his *NAROD* (Russian National Liberation Movement) has greater similarity with ethnic nationalism rather than national democracy. What Russian's described as 'conservatism' was never akin to conservatism in Europe because it propagated 'banal conservatism' and a 'melange of religious-mystical rhetoric, traditions' while prioritising the state over individual citizens (Kochkin 2003). Russian conservatism is hostile to Western values and is aligned with anti-EU populist-nationalists. and has never had anything in common with centre-right national democracy in Ukraine and the three Baltic republics. Russian national democrats are very late on the scene; in fact, they are grudgingly appearing over half a century after they made their first appearance in Ukraine (Zakharov 2005) and other non-Russian republics of the former USSR. Ukrainian and nonRussian dissidents and oppositionists in the Soviet Union promoted demands for

national *and* human rights; hence they were national democrats. Russian national democrats did not exist in the USSR because ethnic Russians did not face threats to their language and culture, and Russian was designated to become the language spoken by the future *Homo Sovieticus*.

Russian and non-Russian national democrats approach politics from diametrically different perspectives and it is therefore unclear why those who are defined by Kolsto (2014) and Laruelle (2014) as 'Russian national democrats' have anything to do with national democracy. A national democrat should be defined as someone seeking an independent nation-state as the homeland for his/her nation as a means to provide ethno-cultural, linguistic, religious and democratic rights to its nation. Russian national democrats have never prioritised building such a nation-state. They presumably do not believe an independent state is needed to protect Russian culture and language because the Russian nation has never been threatened by denationalisation. Crucially, Russian national democrats remain divided and unclear as to what they understand as the borders of the Russian 'imagined community;' indeed, similar to practically all Russian political parties few national democrats see the Russian Federation as the Russian homeland. Laruelle (2019a, p.191) writes that national democrats:

failed to offer a concept of civic belonging to the nation that does not reproduce the classic cliches of Russian nationalism. They do not know how to articulate a liberalism that is founded on individual rights and a nationalism that belongs in essentialized collective identities.

Through their support for the annexation of Crimea and backing for Solzhenitsyn's (1991) Russian Union of the eastern Slavs, Russian national democrats uphold a neo-imperialist agenda, albeit on a smaller scale to that supported by the 'red-white-brown' coalition. National democrats understand 'Russians' as a pan-Russian nation of the eastern Slavs (Kolsto 2014, p.130). Where they differ is perhaps over the use of force to achieve Russia's objectives, with national democrats closer to Nemtsov's 'banks not tanks' than Putin's 'tanks and more tanks.'

Laruelle (2014, 2019a, p.190) seeks to play down Navalny's nationalism by describing him as a 'liberal nationalist' and 'pragmatic nationalist.' Kolsto (2014) also discusses Navalny as a 'liberal nationalist.' 'Liberal

nationalism' and neo-imperialism in western European empires were only compatible up to World War II. Meanwhile, in the 21st century, the rhetoric and discourse of Russian *Natsdems,* from the vantage point of Ukraine, resemble the 'red-white-brown' coalition more than they do national democrats in the non-Russian states of the former USSR.

Navalny said it was immoral for Crimea to be part of Ukraine and believed its transfer in 1954 was 'unreasonable and insulting for every normal citizen of the Russian Federation' (Laruelle 2019a, p.184). While condemning Crimea's annexation in 2014 as a violation of international law, Navalny believes it 'will remain part of Russia and will never again in the foreseeable future become part of Ukraine' (Dolgov 2014). 'Crimea, of course, de facto belongs to Russia' Navalny said. The 'Free Navalny' campaign refused a request from Crimean Tatars to change the map on their website showing Crimea as Russian territory.[8]

Navalny acknowledges that Russian armed forces are inside Ukraine and Putin's military aggression has turned Ukrainians against Russia. He naively places faith in the implementation of the Minsk agreements to achieve peace and thereby end sanctions against Russia,[9] ignoring other Western sanctions against Russia which were introduced in response to its annexation of Crimea.

Both 'normal' and 'abnormal' Russian nationalists are unwilling to let go of Ukraine. Indeed, it remains unclear what Navalny understands to be 'Russian historical territory' (Moen-Larsen 2014, p.556) and presumably he believes this includes Ukraine. Although Navalny was born in Russia his father's family has roots in the northern Ukrainian village of Zalissya, near the Chornobyl (Chernobyl) nuclear plant. Navalny said in the same year Putin launched his war against Ukraine: 'I don't see any kind of difference at all between Russia and Ukraine' (Dolgov 2014) and views Russians and Ukrainians to be 'one nation' (Laruelle 2014, p.281).[10] Navalny understands *Russkii* in the same manner as Solzhenitsyn as encompassing a pan-Russian nation of three eastern Slavs (Dickinson 2021).

Navalny has never disowned his obnoxious nationalist and racist views. Clover (2016, p.286) therefore describes Navalny as the 'pretty face of

Russian nationalism.' Navalny was explicit in using ethnic nationalist rhetoric when saying 'We have the right to be ethnic Russians in Russia. And we will defend that right.'[6] Navalny describes his nationalism as 'normal' in contrast to Putin's 'abnormal' variant which combines ethnic and imperialist discourse. Navalny believes the disintegration of the USSR provides the possibility for Russia to be reborn and he is therefore best described as a postSoviet Russian 'liberal' nationalist (Gessen 2021). Putin, who describes the end of the Soviet Union as the 'greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the (20th) century,' and Russian great power nationalists and Eurasianists look to the past and are nostalgic for the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union.

Navalny, like Solzhenitsyn much earlier, believe that Russia does not need to maintain the Caucasus and Central Asia in some form of union but see Ukraine and Belarus differently and believe the three eastern Slavs should remain together. But how would they respond if Ukrainians did not want to join together with Russia? We will never know how Solzhenitsyn would have responded because he passed away six years before the 2014 crisis; we still await Navalny's thoughts.

Navalny's willingness to discard the Caucasus and Central Asia is unfortunately combined with racist attitudes towards them. His anti-immigration views point to Navalny being closer in spirit to populist nationalism than to centre-right politics and Ukrainian national democracy. Anti-immigration discourse is found in populist nationalist parties throughout Europe and in the US Republican Party since Donald Trump's 2016-2020 presidency. Navalny's depiction of Caucasian immigrants as 'cockroaches' is remarkably similar to Trump's rhetoric about Mexican 'drug dealers, criminals, rapists.'[7].

'Red-white-brown' coalition

Although the 'red-white-brown' coalition is a diverse group its members hold similar views on the need for the unification of eastern Slavs as branches of the pan-Russian nation, expanding the borders of imperial Russia, defending Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian World and holding contempt for the >West (Yudina and Verkhovsky 2019). The 'Reds' were

nostalgic for a large, unified territory, Russia as a great power, and hostile to the West. The ‘Whites’ promoted Orthodox civilisation as a uniquely Russian achievement, were nostalgic for the Tsarist Empire, believed the Euromaidan was the work of an anti-Russian devil, and - as with Putin - Ukraine is an ‘artificial’ Bolshevik construct. The ‘Browns’ believed a ‘Russian Spring’ in ‘New Russia’ would lead to a national totalitarian revolution in Russia and the rebirth of a new and magnificent (fascist-led) country (Laruelle 2016a).[1] [2]

National Bolsheviks

It is interesting that White Russian emigres developed the concept of Eurasian-ism in the 1920s around the same time as national Bolshevism took hold of Stalin’s Soviet Union in the 1930s. Eurasianism and national Bolshevism share not only a similar date of birth but also basically the same views of Russia, the West and of course Ukraine. If the former seeks to build an empire based on a Eurasian civilisation centred on Russia, the latter re-fashioned the Soviet system by merging Tsarist Russian great power nationalism and communism. Clover (2016, p.65) writes: ‘The “National Bolshevism” of Stalin began to look very much like the political programme of Eurasianists.’

White Russian emigres and Russian Eurasianists are proud to describe themselves as statist imperialists because the Russian Empire and the USSR were, they claim, ‘voluntary unions’ and beneficial to the nations they united. Eurasianism is ‘an attempt to articulate a new ideology for the Russian empire’ (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.163). Ukrainians should endorse the bizarre claim that Russian imperialism was beneficial to them while Western colonialism was satanic. Eurasianists and Russian nationalists never accepted responsibility for past misfortunes: ‘it has always been someone else who was to blame for the troubles of Russia - but not its own people, not the Russians’ (Yanov 1978, p.96). Eurasianism draws on five decades of Soviet whitewashing of Tsarist imperialism and ‘never presupposes the perception of Russia and Soviet policies as colonial’ (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.164). Eurasianism is after all a ‘substitute for the post-colonial perspective’ (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, p.162) and Eurasianists have supported the assimilation of non-Russians (Laruelle

2004). Ukrainian patriots and nationalists therefore disagreed with Eurasianist whitewashing of Russian colonialism, denationalisation and Russification. Post-colonial criticism of Tsarist and Soviet treatment of the Ukrainian language and culture is not a new phenomenon but stretches back over two centuries (see Kuzio 2020b). The origins of Eurasianism are to be found in nine areas:

Russian nationalists in a positive manner; they came to be ‘drinking from the same well’ (Clover 2016, p.66).

3 *Communists*: The ‘Russian Party’ inside the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when it was led between 1964 and 1985 by Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko.

4 *Siloviki:* The senior echelons of the Soviet military and GRU, the KGB (and its successors, the SVR and the FSB), Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

5 *Soviet Russian Intellectuals*: Soviet Academy of Sciences and, from 19901991, Russian Academy of Sciences, editors and writers for ‘thick’ journals *Molodaya Gvardiya, Nash Sovremennik, Moskva* and others.

6 *Historians*: For half a century from the mid-1930s to the mid-1980s, Soviet Russian historians drew on modified forms of Tsarist historiography and heaped praise on the Tsarist Empire. Research and writing on Kyiv Rus was the preserve of Russian historians who portrayed ‘Kievan Russia’ as ‘the first Russian state.’

7 *Soviet Russian Citizens:* VOOPIK, *Otechestvo* and *Pamiat.*

8 *Fascists and neo-Nazis:* Dugin, who began his political life in Soviet Russian neo-Nazi groups, led the way in spreading and teaching Eur-asianism in 1990s Russia. Dugin and Eduard Limonov established the National Bolshevik Party in 1993, the same year as the second hard-line coup d’etat.

9 *Religion:* The Russian Orthodox Church was re-legalised during the Great Patriotic War and heavily infiltrated by the KGB, becoming an arm of the

Soviet state in Ukraine and Belarus where local Churches had been banned and driven underground.

10 *Foreign Ideologists*: Founding member of the *nouvelle droite* (new right) Alain de Benoit and the German conservative revolution. Eurasianism 'began life in a series of discussions with the European right' (Clover 2016, p.206).

White Russian emigres Count Nikolai S. Trubetskoi, Pyotr N. Savitsky, Lev Krasavin, Georges Florovsky, Gennady N. Vernadsky and Mikhail Shakhmatov developed Eurasianism as a means to explain what had befallen the Tsarist Russian Empire. In the 1990s it became useful in explaining the disintegration of the USSR.

In the 1920s and 1930s, White Russian emigres were influenced by and sympathised with fascist corporate states (Italy, Portugal, Spain) and did not support a democratic post-Soviet Russia. NTS also backed a Russian corporate state. The main tenets of Eurasianism were autocracy and a strong Russian state, anti-liberalism, no sympathy for human rights, opposition to multi-culturalism and the 'mixing of races,' and a third way between capitalism and communism (Laqueur 1993, p.140). Eurasianists lived in a world of conspiracy theories. Eurasianism was 'virulently anti-American' (Laqueur 1993, p.141) and hostile to 'Atlanticist values' and NATO. White Russian emigres, Eurasianists, and official Soviet Russian and dissident Russian nationalists were strongly dismissive of and negative towards Western influences on Russia, believing Russia should not accept the 'civilization of Mickey Mouse and Rambo' (Yasman 1992, p.34). Eurasianists were pro-German but ambivalent about China and Japan. They therefore differed with Russian nationalist dissidents in the USSR who had viewed China as a threat to the Soviet Union.

Dugin evolved from a Nazi sympathiser in the USSR to a member of *Pamiat* in the late 1980s, and through a variety of great power nationalist political projects in the 1990s and 2000s. Dugin's fan club is in 'some of the darker recesses of post-Yeltsin Russia' (Clover 2016, p.260). Eurasianism provided Dugin and other Russian great power nationalists with an explanation as to why the Soviet Union had disintegrated and how it could revive as a great power. Dugin's book *The Foundations of Geopolitics* was

printed in a large print run and republished in three further editions. Dugin lectured at the Russian General Staff Academy where he was able to explain to the former Soviet, and from 1991 Russian, military high command that the enemy had not changed. Dugin 'would plant the seed of Eurasian extreme-right theory in the fertile ground of Russia's military *nomenklatura*, shorn of its status and privilege, and there it began to germinate' (Clover 2016, p.205).

The emergence of a 'virulent nationalist movement' in the 1990s 'took the mainstream hostage' under Putin (Clover 2016, p.287). Writing six years before the 2014 crisis, Andreas Umland (2008) found that 'The Russian extreme right, including some of its crypto-fascist sections, is becoming an ever more influential part of Moscow mainstream public discourse. Its influence can be felt in Russia's mass media, academia, civil society, arts, and politics.'

Russia re-defined itself as Eurasian during the second half of the 1990s during Primakov's stewardship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his first year in office, Putin described Russia as a Eurasian country. The former Soviet *siloviki* in charge of Russia had never believed their country had a European identity and were incensed that Russia was seen by the West as a defeated nation and not afforded respect as a great power. NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia and the West's alleged orchestration of colour revolutions in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine were the final straws before they applauded Putin's response in Crimea.

During Putin's presidency, different tenets of Eurasianism have been implemented, including towards Ukraine. Eurasianists reinforce the nationalist belief that only Russia among the 15 former Soviet republics possesses sovereignty, Russians are a 'super race' and the 'elder brother' who have a God-given right to assert hegemony over Eurasia. Russia is unique and superior to *both* Western and Eastern civilisations because it has fused Byzantine, Mongol, Slavic and Turkic influences (Yanov 1978, p.123). Eur-asianism believes Russian values are superior to European, rejects Western political models, embraces the Mongol-Tatar-Eurasian heritage and provides a new post-Soviet world outlook and identity for Russia's *siloviki.*

The closeness of Eurasianism and national Bolshevism meant that following the disintegration of the USSR it was inevitable they would become natural allies in post-Soviet Russia. National Bolsheviks were nostalgic for the USSR but after 1991 came to ignore the seven decades Ukraine had been a Soviet republic. National Bolsheviks and Eurasianists agreed that Ukraine was 'artificially' created by the Soviet regime:

In the USSR, a myth was created about Ukraine as a country, in which another type of people lives - 'Ukrainians'. They were separate, albeit 'fraternal', people. They supposedly consisted of boys and girls in costume, and, as such, were considered to be 'folk'. This complimentary, and not substituting identity is the only thing that can help the future of Ukraine and its people. Not a concept of 'Ukrainian, not Russian', but that of 'Little Russian and Russian.' This will return to Ukraine the meaning of existence as a true Little Russia, as an integral part of the Russian world.[12]

Eurasianists and contemporary national Bolsheviks have never accepted Ukraine and Ukrainians exist and therefore their growing influence in Russia had important ramifications for Ukraine's security. Putin views the Russian World as lying at the core of Eurasian imperialism and incomplete without Ukraine (Hill and Gaddy 2015, p.374). Eurasianists believed Ukrainians are one of the three branches of the pan-Russian nation (Shekhovtsov 2017, pp.186-187).

Dugin's book *The Fourth Political Theory,* published a year after Russia's invasion of Georgia, predicted a coming battle for eastern Ukraine and Crimea (Shekhovtsov 2015). He wrote that an independent Ukraine was a threat to Eurasia which should be dismembered and absorbed by Russia (Clover 2016, p.238; Umland 2019, p.114). From a Ukrainian point of view Eurasanism and national Bolshevism are no different to other forms of Russian great power nationalism in the 'red-white-brown' coalition because they all denied the existence of a Ukrainian state and Ukrainian nation.

Eurasianism never had any intellectual and political support in Ukraine. The KPU supported a revived USSR, but it would be a stretch to call this Eurasianism. The Socialist Party of Ukraine and social democratic parties supported an independent Ukraine and CIS economic integration. The Russian nationalist wing of the Party of Regions was nostalgic for the

Soviet Union and believed Ukraine belonged within the Russian World, but again it would be a major stretch to describe this as a Ukrainian form of Eurasianism.

There is no Ukrainian intellectual tradition of Eurasianism and no Ukrainian Dugin. Ukraine's membership of a Eurasian union is incompatible with an independent state as it would necessitate a shift to implementing eastern Slavic national identity policies undertaken by Lukashenka in Belarus. It is therefore not surprising Russian and Ukrainian emigres could not reach agreement in the Cold War (Tromly 2019, pp.122-144).

Two factors made Russian great power nationalist and Eurasianist views implausible to Ukrainians. Firstly, ethnic Russians ('Great Russians') were never more than half of the Soviet population; in the 1989 Soviet census they accounted for only 50.8 percent. Russian nationalists and Eurasianists increased the number of 'Russians' by including Ukrainians and Belarusians alongside Russians. The English and French in the UK and France, respectively, were dominant ethnic groups; the population of England is ten times larger than Scotland and 17 times larger than Wales. Secondly, Russian nationalists were outliers in defining Tsarist Russia and the USSR as budding nation-states. Austrians and Hungarians, who constituted a combined 43 percent of their empire, never viewed their empire as two budding nation-states.

In the decade prior to the 2014 crisis, the Eurasian Youth Union and other Eurasianist organisations travelled to Ukraine to organise local cells, participate in protests and undertake other forms of direct action, such as the vandalism of Ukrainian national symbols. From 2005-2006, they trained Russian nationalist extremists from Ukraine, such as the Donetsk Republic political group that came to power in the DNR, in Russian summer camps.

The influence of Eurasianists and their national Bolshevik allies culminated in the officially funded Izborsky Club, opened in September 2012 just after Putin's re-election where leading members of the 'red-white-brown' coalition could meet, network and discuss policies. Laruelle (2016b, p.629) therefore described the Izborsky Club as imperialist rather than nationalist. The Izborsky Club influenced Russia's Foreign Policy Concept which

became official policy on the eve of the Ukraine-Russia crisis (Engstrom 2014) and they represented the core group ‘behind the Kremlin’s drive towards fascism, war and Eurasian empire’ (Zubrin 2015). The Izborsky Club assisted in the drafting of the DNR constitution (Laruelle 2016b). The Izborsky Club and ‘red-white-brown’ coalition provided the ideological foundations for the ‘New Russia’ project where Russia was to be reborn with a Eurasian identity (Laruelle 2016a).

Surkov and Dugin ‘played a significant role in shaping Russian perceptions of its near abroad’ (De Maio 2016) while Girkin, Gubarev, Borodai and others emerged from the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition to play central roles in the 2014 crisis (Laruelle 2016a). Gubarev, who had been the un-elected ‘people’s governor’ of the DNR in spring 2014, published the book *Fakel Novorossiia* (The Torch of New Russia) three years later. In the book he celebrated his earlier membership of RNE and described himself as an ‘imperial minded person’ fighting for the unity of the Russian civilisational space of which ‘Russian’ Donetsk was a part (Laruelle 2019b, p.729).

The ‘red-white-brown’ coalition adamantly believed that the annexation of Crimea, ‘New Russia’ and the Donbas were long overdue as part of the ‘gathering of Russian lands’ (Laruelle 2016a). Eurasianists, as with all Russian great power nationalists, had never reconciled themselves to south-eastern Ukraine belonging to Ukraine. A new Eurasian Union, they believed, should include all of the former USSR except the three Baltic states and western Ukraine (Shekhovtsov 2017, pp.188-189).

Aleksandr Prokhanov was one of the most influential intellectuals in the 1990s ‘red-brown’ and in the 2000s ‘red-white-brown’ coalitions. He was the author of the July 1991 ‘A Word to the People’ statement which became the manifesto of the hard-line August 1991 putsch led by the *Gosudarstvennyj komitet po chrezvychaynomu polozheniiu* (State Committee on the State of Emergency - GKChP). Prokhanov was a founding member of the National Salvation Front and (together with Dugin) supported the 1993 ‘pastiche of contradictions’ coup d’etat against Yeltsin (Clover 2016, p.209).

Prokhanov has been the editor of the ‘red-brown’ *Den (The Day*, 19921993) and ‘red-white-brown’ *Zavtra (Tomorrow*, since 1993) newspapers. He has

supported the KPRF and national-Bolshevik Motherland Party. *Zavtra* moved from the margins of Russian political life to the mainstream during Putin's presidency and its ideas were discussed in the Izborsky Club and integrated into Russian foreign policy doctrine. Prokhanov welcomed Putin's election in 2000 with the words: 'The Kremlin is once again mine, once again part of the family' (Balmforth 2014). Prokhanov praised RNE member and DNR Prime Minister Borodai as a 'true White Russian nationalist.'

Prokhanov believes that Russia, which had a glorious past and will have an even more glorious future, has a God-given mission to save the world. Like all Russian great power nationalists and Eurasianists, Prokhanov believes Russia's 'natural' state of affairs is to be an empire. Russia has allegedly lived in four 'empires' under Kyiv-Novgorod's 'Vladimir the Holy;' Ivan the Terrible; Peter the Great; and Stalin and awaits the creator of a Fifth Empire. Prokhanov views 'Kievan Russia' as the 'first Russian state' and therefore welcomes the unveiling of a monument to Grand Prince 'Vladimir' (Volody-myr) in Moscow in 2016, praises Ivan the Terrible and Stalin, and believes Ukraine and Ukrainians are a fiction of somebody's poor imagination.

Figure 6.1 Russian great power nationalists lay claim to Kyiv Rus, praise Ivan the Terrible and Stalin and await a new dictator.

Source: https://euvsdisinfo.eu/waiting-for-the-advent-of-the-fifth-stalin

192 *Russian nationalism versus Ukraine* ***Black hundreds***

Russian emigres and the Russian Orthodox Church supported extreme variants of Russian nationalism and chauvinism and cooperated with the NTS (Laqueur 1993, pp.225). Contemporary Russian Black Hundreds drew on the great power nationalism and anti-Semitism of the pre-1905 Union of the Russian People, Putin's regime, oligarchs and the Russian Orthodox Church (Laruelle 2016a). The eclectic 'ideology' of Russian black hundreds consisted of ultra-conservativism, monarchism, Russian Orthodoxy, autocracy, anti-Westernism and anti-Semitism (Laruelle 2016a, pp.63-64).

Russian Orthodox fundamentalists would have been unable to launch their jihad against Ukraine without the backing of Putin's regime. The black hundreds wing of the 'red-white-brown' coalition united supporters of the (Bolshevik) 'Reds' and (Monarchist Orthodox) 'Whites' in their evocation of the 'historical destiny' of Russia as an empire. Girkin's *spetsnaz* unit participated in the invasion of Crimea and intervened from there into mainland Ukraine. Girkin, a 'former' Russian intelligence officer, had worked for and was supported by Orthodox oligarch Malofeev.

Russian black hundreds believed they were participating in a religious jihad which would defend 'Russians' in Ukraine and rebuild an Orthodox 'Holy Rus'. In addition to dismembering Ukraine, 'New Russia' was also 'a holy war for Russia's future' and 'for a great country that twenty-five years ago was divided into pieces' (Whewell 2014a, 2014b). Ukraine was for them a 'Russian land, as it was for White Russian emigres. Echoing Putin, they said that 'New Russia' is populated by the 'Russian' people (Whewell 2015). The 'Russian' people were divided, and 'Russian' lands were wrongly included in other countries, two injustices which the 'Orthodox al-Qaeda' were determined to rectify (Newman 2014; Whewell 2014a, 2014b). 'Holy Rus' and the pan-Russian nation were synonymous and Ukraine could only exist as part of the Russian World.

The origins of their Ukrainophobia lay in Tsarist conspiracy theories of an ‘artificial’ Ukrainian nation created by Western powers to divide the ‘Russian people.’ White Russian emigre conspiracies of a century-old Austrian conspiracy behind the emergence of an ‘artificial’ Ukrainian nation (Wolkonsky 1920) was expanded to include Poles, Swedes and even Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state who had supported the creation of republics for the nonRussian nations in opposition to Stalin’s plans for them only receiving autonomy within Russia.

In post-Soviet Russia, the Russian Orthodox Church has allied with Russian great power nationalist and xenophobic political forces and, as Chapter 7 shows, holds extreme chauvinistic attitudes towards Ukraine and Ukrainians. Ivan Okhlobystin and Archimandrite Tikhon, a member of the Russian Orthodox Church Supreme Council, are just some of the Russian Orthodox clergy who are cooperating with the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition. The Russian Orthodox Army (Vasylenko, Kabakayev, Alekseyeva and Morozov 2020, pp.81-85), Imperial Legion, Cossack companies and White Guard great power nationalists such as Girkin held close relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. Dmitry Sapozhnikov, leader of a fringe Monarchist Party in St. Petersburg, trained a unit of former Russian *spetsnaz* for the Donbas war.[13] Russian black hundreds were defending ‘Russian people, people of the Russian nation, of Russian language and culture, of Orthodox religion’ (Whewell 2014a, 2014b). Describing themselves as ‘Orthodox Monarchists’ (i.e., black hundreds) they, alongside Russian great power nationalists and fascists, supported a ‘Holy Rus’ (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus) as the core of a new empire.

Russian black hundreds must have felt confused upon arriving in the Donbas because the ‘Jerusalem’ of Donetsk is not very Orthodox. Ukrainians are more religiously devout than Russians and have practically as many Orthodox parishes as the much larger Russian Federation. The bulk of these Orthodox parishes though are in ‘orange’ central and western Ukraine - not in eastern Ukraine. Up to 2014 in the Donbas there were nearly as many Protestant as there were Orthodox parishes. Russian Orthodox fundamentalists view Protestants as foreign, principally US agents encroaching on ‘Holy Rus’ and they have been subjected to harsh repression in Russian occupied Crimea and the Donbas (Novitchkova,

Tomak, Valko and Cooper 2015). Girkin's Russian Orthodox fundamentalists murdered four Protestant leaders when they briefly occupied Slovyansk in spring 2014 (Whewell 2015).

Russian black hundreds believed they were the heirs of the 'Whites' in the Russian civil war. In the Russian civil war they had fought against the 'Reds' but they were now on the same side in the 'red-white-brown' coalition which had been forged in blood in 1991, 1993 and 2014. Girkin spent his weekends dressed as a White officer in re-enactments of civil war battles. Igor Ivanov, one of Girkin's commanders, wanted to 'Restore traditions of the Russian imperial army' (Whewell 2015).

As Chapter 5 showed, Putin had permitted Russian imperial fantasies' 'wide reign' when he had rehabilitated and re-integrated White Russian emigre chauvinistic views into the Russian mainstream (Whewell 2014a, 2014b). Russian black hundreds fought in eastern-southern Ukraine 'For God, Tsar, and Nation' (Whewell 2014a, 2014b). Recruiting posters in St. Petersburg called upon Russians to *Pomogy Russky NovoRossiya* (Help Russians in 'New Russia') (Whewell 2015). 'Former fascist' Raevskiy had transitioned into a 'Russian orthodox monarchist' after he was recruited by the White emigre Russian All-Military Union to fight 'Ukrainian fascists' in the Donbas.

Blackshirts

White Russian emigres and Eurasianists had been sympathetic to fascist political systems in Italy, Portugal and Spain. NTS, with its ties to ROA and the Vlasov movement during World War II, held fascist sympathies. Russian fascists and neo-Nazis drew on 1920s Aleksandr Kazembek's theories of Russian fascism and the White Russian emigre *Mlado Rossy* (Young Russians) (Goble 2014). Russian fascists and neo-Nazis denounced Jews 'as oligarchs and capitalist bankers, as enemies of Christianity and of Russia, and as polluting the White Aryan race in Europe' (Laruelle 2016a, p.71).

In Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko's USSR from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, the KGB turned a blind eye to neo-Nazis who were never arrested. Russian fascists and neo-Nazis were not found in the Gulag

because they were never criminally prosecuted (Wishnewsky 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1987). Russian neo-Nazis, similar to dissident Russian nationalists, usually expressed loyalty to the Soviet state and, because they never called for Russian independence, were never a threat to the territorial integrity of the USSR.

Fascist and anti-Semitic views were found in the ranks of dissident Russian nationalists and their *samizdat* publications. But there was little need for such *samizdat* because the ideological appetites of Russian fascists and neo-Nazis were over-catered for by print runs in the millions of official 'thick' journals and supported by the 'Russian Party' in the Communist Party and *Komsomol.* Meanwhile, their loathing of Jews was catered for by official anti-Zionist campaigns which were nothing else but camouflaged Soviet anti-Semitism.

Russian fascists and neo-Nazis supported a post-Soviet Russia united around Russian Orthodoxy and re-built as a totalitarian state (Wishnewsky 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1987). They were present in the *Pamiat* movement and the myriad of 'brown' political groups which had supported the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d'etat.. The origins of the blackshirt 'Browns' lay in the pre-Soviet black hundred movement, fascist emigre political forces and White emigre anti-Semitism that had denounced the alleged Jewish origins of Bolsheviks, and the emigre Russian Orthodox Church (Chatterje-Doody and Tolz 2020, p.10).

The RNE was one of the most influential of these and was briefly banned for its participation in the 1993 coup d'etat. In the 1990s, RNE had 350 regional branches in 100 regions and between 50,000-200,000 supporters. RNE's newspaper *Russkii Poriadok* (*Russian Order*) was printed in the tens of thousands (Simonsen 1996, p.635; Laruelle 2016a). No Ukrainian nationalist party was ever as large and influential as the RNE.

The RNE supported both *Russkii* and *Rossiiski* definitions of Russian national identity and a Russian unitary state for *Russkii* and *Rossiian*. The RNE understood *Russkii* in the same manner as Solzhenitsyn's Russian Union, composed of the three eastern Slavs, as the core of Russia (Barkashov 1994). Similar to their 'Red' and 'White' allies, the RNE had no doubts Ukraine was an 'artificial' state created by the Bolsheviks

(Laruelle 2016a, pp.62-64). In the totalitarian Russian state created by the RNE, Ukrainians and Belarusians would have no national minority rights and be subjected to assimilation and Russification (Simonsen 1996, p.632).

The ‘Brown’ wing of Russian politics - fascists and neo-Nazis - played an important role in the war in Ukraine in 2014 and since (Coynash 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d, 2015a, 2015b). High-profile involvement of Russian fascists and neo-Nazis in the Russian-Ukrainian war was supremely ironic because one of the main themes in Russian information warfare and disinformation was the coming to power of ‘fascists’ in the Euromaidan coup d’etat. Real Russian fascists and neo-Nazis were fighting a mythical ‘fascist Ukraine’ manufactured by Kremlin propagandists. Boruch Gorin, head of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia, said: ‘It is also no secret that, on the side of the separatists, war is also being waged by real Russian Nazis’[14] (Toal 2017, p.252). Many of the Russian mercenaries had swastika tattoos which they claimed, when asked by Western journalists, were ancient Slavic and neo-pagan symbols or from the time they had spent in prison.[15] Laruelle (2016a, p.67) writes that ‘Many groups of nationalist volunteers active in the Donbas display fascist symbols, offering all possible versions of the swastika.’

The RNE’s mercenaries fought in the Russian-Ukrainian war alongside those from the National Bolshevik party, the Eurasia Party, the Motherland Party, the International Eurasian Movement, the Slavic Union, and the Movement Against Illegal Immigration. A special forces unit in the LNR included Nazis from Leningrad commanded by Aleksandr Bednov. As Clover (2016, p. 285) writes, ‘their culture was violent, fascistic, with straight armed salutes and swastikas.’

RNE members played a prominent role in the early stages of the Donbas war. Gubarev, leader of the *Novorossiia* Party and the Donetsk branch of the RNE, became governor of *Donetsk oblast* and Aleksandr Borodai became Prime Minister of the DNR. Gubarev led the March 2014 attacks against pro-Ukrainian protestors in Donetsk, the storming of SBU buildings in the

PRO-KREMLIN FAKES ABOUT UKRAINE
2021: THE WEST PROVOKED A COUP IN UKRAINE
2020: UKRAINE WILL DISINTEGRATE
2019: NAZIS TOOK OVER UKRAINE WITH A COUP
2018: THE CRIMEAN QUESTION IS "COMPLETELY CLOSED"
2017: THE PEOPLE OF CRIMEA DETERMINED THEIR OWN FATE
2016: CRIMEA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF RUSSIA
2015: UKRAINE IS NOT A COUNTRY ANYMORE
DiSiNFO
EUvs DiSiNFO

Figure 6.2 'The Russian media constantly tries to make a connection between independence, Banderites and fascism' (Shkandrij 2016, p.129).
Source: https://euvsdisinfo.eu/donbas-creating-fakes-on-the-ground/?highlight=ukraine

city and organising the transportation of vigilantes (dubbed at the time 'political tourists') from the Russian city of Rostov (Coynash 2014a). RNE members or individuals who closely cooperated with neo-Nazis included Boitsov, leader of Orthodox Donbas, Borodai, a frequent contributor to the *Den* and *Zavtra* newspapers, Rostislav Zhuravlev, leader of the Shield of Moscow, Aleksei Khudyakov, Ravil Khalikov and Limonov from Other Russia, and Mikhail Verin, commander of the Russian Orthodox Army (Vasylenko, Kabakayev, Alekseyeva and Morozov 2020, pp.81-85).

A small number of Russian fascist and neo-Nazi groups opposed Russian military aggression against Ukraine. These included the National Democrats, the National Democratic Alliance, and the Slavic Force. Some of their members joined the Azov Regiment, a unit of Ukraine's national guard largely composed of Russian-speaking eastern Ukrainians. Azov's political party, the National Corps, has neo-Nazi sympathies (Yudina 2015).

The training, protection, supplies and transportation of Russian fascists and neo-Nazis as mercenaries conducting military aggression against Ukraine

could only have been possible with the backing of the Russian state and facilitated by Russian intelligence. Russian mercenaries, including fascists and neo-Nazis, were trained by Russian intelligence in Crimea and Rostov for hybrid warfare and terrorist attacks in mainland Ukraine (Kuzio 2015).

Nationalists in Ukraine never used genocidal discourse against Russians of the kind used by Russian Eurasianists, fascists and neo-Nazis against Ukrainians[16] and *no* Ukrainian nationalist group has ever denied the existence of a Russian state or a Russian nation. In contrast, Girkin said: 'Ukrainians are those who don't understand they are Russians who should be killed.'[17] NeoNazi Aleksandr Zhuchkovsky came to Ukraine to destroy the country because its independence was not in Russia's interests (Coynash 2019).

RNE leader Barkashov warned:

All (Ukrainian) military officers who gave orders will be destroyed without a court order and investigation. All Kyiv- *Ukrop* (Ukrainian politicians) will be destroyed. All Rightsex (a play on *Pravyy Sektor* [Right Sector]) and homosexuals will be destroyed. We will locate and find all their hiding places in forest bunkers. We will find them abroad. They will all die - even if this takes us 2-4 years. We will not leave anybody alive... We will hang all of them, even the underaged, Western football hooligans who are paid with oligarch money to beat up veterans. We are not scaremongering; we just want everybody to know about our plans.

Barkashov added a shrilling warning:

For every one of my comrades in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Slovyansk who is killed we will destroy 100 (Ukrainian) soldiers. Not those who have died in battle, but those who were left alive [i.e., captured as prisoners]. We will hang them all.[18]

The 'red-white-brown' coalition launches operation 'New Russia'

The 'red-white-brown' coalition was given centre stage after Putin's re-election in 2012 when he launched his 'gathering of Russian lands.' Notably, the 'red-white-brown' coalition's networks in Russia (Izborsky Club) and a number of extremist organisations 'played a key role in

structuring the concept of Novorossiya' (Laruelle 2016b, p.644). The 'red-white-brown' coalition was 'now mobilized into action and given centre-stage' as 'operational tools in the information and psychological aspect of the new warfare that Putin waged in Ukraine' (Hill and Gaddy 2015, pp.372-373).

All Russian nationalist, fascist and neo-Nazi groups supported the dismemberment of 'artificial' Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea and 'New Russia.' These 'Brown' fascist groups included the *Russkoie Imperatorskoe Dvizheniye* (Russian Imperial Movement) and its two paramilitary forces *Rezerv* (Reserve) and *Imperskyj Legion* (Imperial Legion), *Svetlaia Rus* (The Light of Rus) and *Narodnyj Sobor* (Peoples Council), the Russian National Front, the Union of Bearers of Orthodox Banners and the black hundreds. Other groups included the Eurasian Youth Union, *Pozharskyj* People's Militia, the Motherland Party, the Russian Orthodox Army, the NDP, the National Socialist Initiative, the Shield of Moscow, Other Russia (successor to the National Bolshevik Party), *Restrukt*, and the RNE.

Russian Cossacks fighting in the Donbas included the Union of Cossack Organisations of Ukraine, the Great Don Army, Wolves *Sotnia* (Company), Khartsyzsk Camp of Ukrainian Cossacks, the Luhansk Precinct of Don Cossacks, and the Luhansk Volunteer Brigade-General Deniken (Baranec 2014; Dzutsati 2016; Bushuiev and Maslakova 2016; Darczewska 2017; Vasylenko, Kabakayev, Alekseyeva and Morozov 2020, pp.81-85; Arnold 2019, 2020; Goble 2020).[19] Some Cossack formations were merged with the Russian Orthodox Army.

Russian veterans of the mercenary war in eastern Ukraine created a Union of Donbas Volunteers led by Borodai which is backed by Surkov. The Union of Donbas Volunteers supports the authorities programme of using Ilyin's writings and ideas for the inculcation of 'patriotism' (i.e., in reality, great power nationalism) in Russian children (Sukhankin 2020). Former DNR 'Prime Minister' Borodai won a seat as a United Russia candidate in the September 2021 Russian elections.[20]

1

Emigres: White Russian emigres developed the initial concept.

2

2 *Stalinism:* National Bolshevism in Stalin’s Soviet Union from the late 1930s and in particular after victory in the Great Patriotic War. In the Cold War, White Russian emigres came to look at Stalin and official

Conclusions

Liberals were at the helm of Russian politics for only a short period of time in the late 1980s and early 1990s, were marginalised by the 1993 coup d'etat and elections in 1993-1996 and unable to stem the tide of Russian great power nationalism. In the second half of the 1990s the Russian authorities transitioned away from viewing their country in the same manner as Gorbachev's USSR as part of the 'common European home' to being at the centre of Eurasia.

Russian national democracy continues to have an unclear destination. National democracy in Russia lacks the two drivers found in Ukraine and the three Baltic states of protecting and reviving national languages and culture and defending national independence. Both goals have no relevance to Russia because the Russian nation has never been threatened by denationalisation and practically all Russian political forces have sought unions and empires and not an independent nation-state. By the mid 1990s most of the small number of Russian national democrats had become great power nationalists.

The 'red-white-brown' coalition hails from different areas of the Russian political spectrum but nevertheless its three groups are united in key fundamental areas. National Bolsheviks and Eurasianists, Orthodox fundamentalist black hundreds and blackshirts define the 'Russian imagined community' as much larger than the Russian Federation, demand Western recognition of Russia as a great power with sole hegemonic control over Eurasia, praise Ivan the Terrible and Stalin, and loathe Western values. They poke fun at an 'artificial' Ukraine and separate Ukrainian nation and adamantly believe Ukrainians are one of three branches of a pan-Russian nation. The next chapter analyses the dogmatic spirituality and the deep-seated messianism of the Russian Orthodox Churches, its belief that Ukraine is an unquestionable part of 'Holy Rus' and the Russian World and the use of information warfare as an important component of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Notes

1 Like all Russian nationalists, Dugin was differentiating between ‘bad’ western and ‘good’ south-eastern Ukrainians. The YouTube video of Dugin’s comments was removed but is cited in: https://www.aspen.review/article/2017/on-the-wrong-a nd-right-ukrainians.

2 *Radio Mayak*, 1 June 1997.

3 *Itar-Tass*, 20-21 January 1997.

4 https://www.libertas-institut.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/EUFAJ-Special-Ne mtsovReport-150521.pdf.

5 https://www.kasparov.ru/material.php?id=592A678B771F9.

6 *The Times*, 25 February 2021.

7 https://time.com/4473972/donald-trump-mexico-meeting-insult.

8 https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-chubarov-volkov-krym/31168036.html and https://free.navalny. com.

9 https://ukraineworld.org/articles/opinions/what-does-aleksey-navalny-really-think-about-ukraine-crimea-and-donbas.

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11 Philip A. Karber. (2015). ‘Russia’s Hybrid War Campaign. Implications for Ukraine and Beyond,’ The Potomac Foundation and CSIS Russia and Eurasia Program, 10 March.

12 https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/myth-about-ukraine-and-ukrainians-as-a-separate-na tion-was-created-in-the-ussr.

13 Andrew Goryanov and Olga Ivshina, ‘Boyets “spetsnaza DNR”: pomoshch Rossii byla reshayushey,’ *BBC Russian Service*, 31 March 2015, http://www.bbc. com/russian/international/2015/03/150325_donetsk_rebel_interview.

14 Sam Sokol, ‘Top Rebel Leader Accuses Jews of Masterminding Ukrainian Revolution,’ *Jerusalem Post,* 22 June 2015.

15 Julia Ioffe, ‘My Mind-Melting Week on the Battlefields of Ukraine,’ *New Republic*, 16 June 2014; *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 15 June 2015; Sergei Sukhanin, ‘Unleashing the PMC’s and Irregulars in Ukraine: Crimea and Donbas,’ *Jamestown Foundation*, 3 September 2019. https://jamestown.org/program/unleashing-the-pm cs-and-irregulars-in-ukraine-crimea-and-donbas/.

16 *Denis Kazanskyy blog*, 13 November 2016.

17 Denis Kazanskyy, ‘Strelkov zaiavil, chto ukrainsy - eto nepravilnye russkie, kotoryh nuzhno ubivat,’ 26 January 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= IL1zGViPbtI.

18 ‘Ksenofobiya v ukrayini v 2014r. v kontektsi revolyutsii ta interventsii,’ Kyiv: National Committee of Ukrainian and Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, 2015, p.40.

19 *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 30 April, 3 July, 21 October, 1, 13, 26, and 30 December 2014, 5 and 10 February, 7 July 2015, 12 February 2016.

20 https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/donbas-pasportyzatsiya-i-boyovyky-na-vyborakh -u-rosiyi/31256443.html

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7 Messianism, ‘Holy Rus,’ and the Russian World

The situation with the Orthodox Church defies comprehension... They created this breakaway church under the Istanbul curacy.Now look at how dependent they are becoming on Turkey, on the Turkish Patriarchy. Many appointments and, most importantly, a lot of money. I think this is Bartholomew’s main impelling motive, to subjugate this territory and make money from it. I believe this is the main underlying motive - except for a tip from Washington, of course.

Of course, this is another indication of the fact that the measure is also related to the [2019 Ukrainian] election campaign and is meant to further widen the divide between Russian and Ukrainian peoples. This is a clear and flagrant violation of freedom of religion. I am mostly concerned about the likelihood that property redistribution will follow. This redistribution could turn into a heavy dispute, if not bloodshed, God forbid.

Vladimir Putin (2018)

In one of his seminal works Robert Conquest wrote that ‘Communism is a sort of religion’ and arguably nowhere is this more the case than in Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church was re-legalised during the Great Patriotic War and became de *facto* the state Church in the USSR which it viewed as its entire canonical territory. The Russian Orthodox Church is the de *facto* state Church in the Russian Federation. Mark Galeotti (2019) writes: ‘It has been under Vladimir Putin and, especially, Metropolitan Kirill, who was elected in 2009, that the Kremlin-Church alliance has been most striking.’

The Russian Orthodox Church has been allocated two roles under Tsars, Soviets and contemporary Russian great power nationalists. Firstly, guardian of the unity of ‘Holy Rus’ (Plokhy 2017, p.330), a role which has strategic implications for Ukraine. The eastern Slavs were the core of the USSR and they continue to play this role in ‘Holy Rus’ and the Russian World. Secondly, an ‘ideological superstructure of Putin’s new Eurasian empire’ (Besier 2017, p.233; Curanovic 2019, p.259).

The Russian Orthodox Church split in the 1920s and a wing inside the USSR eventually agreed to collaborate with the Soviet regime, becoming heavily infiltrated by the KGB. The toleration and promotion of official Russian nationalism within Soviet society from the mid-1960s to the mid-

DOI: 10.4324/9781003191438-8 1980s deepened conservative and Russian great power nationalism within the Russian Orthodox Church. In the emigration, the anti-Soviet wing of the Russian Orthodox Church was stuck in a White emigre time warp. The unification of both wings of the Russian Orthodox Church in 2007 supercharged Russian great power nationalism and the drive to 'gather Russian lands.'

The Russian Orthodox Church has supported eight important areas which have had significant repercussions on Russian-Ukrainian relations. Three of these were inherited from the USSR (numbers 1, 2, and 3) while a further four developed during Putin's presidency (numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7). The eighth arose in the 2014 crisis about which Galeotti (2019) writes:

Kirill full-threadedly endorsed the 2014 annexation of Crimea and condemned the alleged 'persecution' of Russian-speakers in the Donbas. Indeed, religious themes were heavily employed in the early years of the Donbas war to attract and motivate volunteers and mercenaries.

A discussion of these eight factors follows.

First, following the disintegration of the USSR, the Russian Orthodox Church continued to view Eurasia as is its 'canonical' territory, adding to the existing conflation of the Russian 'imagined community' with the USSR. Second, the Russian Orthodox Church believed the eastern Slavs descended from 'the first Russian state' in 'Kievan Russia' and were three branches of a pan-Russian nation. Third, the Russian Orthodox Church was the handmaiden of the Tsarist occupying army and Soviet regime when they destroyed the Ukrainian Autocephalous and Greek Catholic Churches, in the process removing competitors in Ukraine and gaining a large number of parishes.[1] In the post-Soviet era, the Russian Orthodox Church has been intolerant towards other religious confessions in what it considers to be its 'canonical territory' and has never condemned the closure and repression of Ukrainian religious confessions in the Russian Federation and Russian

occupied Crimea and the Donbas.[2] Anti-Western xenophobia in the Russian Orthodox Church contributed to this intolerance (Gvosdev 2000).

Fourth was the canonisation of Tsarist Russian empire builders, and fifth, the reburial in Putin's Russia of White Russian emigre intellectuals and generals. Sixth, the Russian World became a 'new project for integrating the post-Soviet space based on a civilisation community' (Wawrzonek 2014, p.760). The Russian World superseded state borders and national sovereignty and there is increasinging confusion as to where the borders of Russia's 'imagined community' are to be found. After his election as Patriarch in 2009, Kirill infused Orthodox messianism into the Russian World and supported Putin's 'gathering of Russian lands.' Seventh was the glorification of tyrannical Russian leaders Ivan the Terrible (Patrushev 2021), Stalin and others (Engstrom 2014; Kuzio 2017). Russian Orthodox Church believers have laid flowers at monuments to Stalin.[3]

Eighth, as witnessed in and since 2014, the Russian Orthodox Church believes that violence is justified in defence of 'Holy Rus' - a 'single spiritual community' of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians who are 'united in faith, history and culture.' The Russian Orthodox Church upholds the Kremlin's discourse what is taking place in Ukraine is a 'civil war.'

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first analyses exceptionalism and messianism in the Russian Orthodox Church. The second discusses how the Russian Orthodox Church views itself as the protector of the unity of 'Holy Rus' and a pan-Russian nation. The third analyses the Russian World. The fourth section investigates how these three areas have contributed to Ukrainophobia within the Russian Orthodox Church. The final section analyses the Russian Orthodox Church's facilitation of Russia's annexation of Crimea, the Kremlin's stance on the war in Ukraine and the impact of both factors on Ukraine's withdrawal from the Russian World and Ukrainian Orthodox autocephaly.

Exceptionalism and messianism

The Russian Orthodox Church's control of Ukraine was important in contributing towards the formulation of Muscovite and Russian imperial

ideology. The Russian Orthodox Church took canonical control of Ukraine in 1686, following the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman Turks and the creation of a Russian Orthodox Patriarchate in 1589. In September 2018, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I declared Russian Orthodox Church control to be 'uncanonical' and returned Ukraine to the canonical authority of Constantinople. A *Tomos* issued five months later by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I granted autocephaly to Ukraine, making the Orthodox Church of Ukraine the only canonical Orthodox Church in the country.[4] The Russian Orthodox Church views the Orthodox Church of Ukraine as 'schismatic' and is incandescent with rage at the 'encroachment' and 'illegal invasion' of Constantinople into what it declares to be 'uncontested Church borders.' The Russian Orthodox Church's contempt for Ukrainian sovereignty could be seen when it condemned the August 2021 visit of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I to Kyiv 'without an invitation from the Patriarch of Moscow and All-Rus' (Russian Orthodox Church 2021). The Russian Orthodox Church agrees with the Kremlin that 'The OCU [Orthodox Church of Ukraine] project initiated by the US is aimed not so much at a religious split in Ukraine, as at the artificial creation of a Ukrainian political nation that hates Russia.'[5]

At the turn of the 16th century, when Muscovy took religious control of Ukraine, Filofey, a monk in the Monastery of Pskov prepared the ideological foundations of Moscow as the 'Third Rome.' In an epistle written to Ivan Ill he stated that 'all the empires of the Orthodox Christian Faith have come into thy sole empire: thou alone in all the earth art Tsar to the Christians ...two Rome's fell, but the third stands, and there will be no fourth.' Moscow was the new Constantinople and Ivan III the new Emperor Constantine. The *translatio* of imperium from Rome to Constantinople to Moscow was justified on the basis of the faithlessness of the previous seats of empires and a suitable scriptural basis was included to provide it with an air of fulfilment of prophecy.

The Moscow Patriarchate views itself as the 'Mother Church' of all Orthodox Churches in the former USSR, a policy that closely resembles Soviet elucidations of Russians as the elder brother. Under Patriarch Kirill and Putin, Kyiv came to be described as the 'common Jerusalem' (Deny-senko 2014, p.246; Whewell 2015; Wawrzonek 2021, p.22). 'Jerusalem'

Kyiv stood at the centre of a ‘Holy Rus’ evoking an image of an ‘enlightened’ Holy Land ‘illuminated by faith.’ Palestine was the Holy Land because Jesus Christ had lived there and it represented the physical setting for a possible means of salvation. Russia is ‘holy’ with a specific mission to save souls in a land where, ‘Christ still walked, in spirit if not in person’ (Yanov 1978, p.96). It was therefore the Russian ruler’s mission to ‘protect’ all Orthodox Christians in Putin’s realm and the ‘near abroad.’

These messianic views of the Russian Orthodox Church flourished and deepened in the Soviet Union. The official Russian nationalist journal *Molodaya Gvardiya* ‘quickly became identified with the extreme position in the movement to revive “Holy Russia,” a position that sought to cultivate a Great Russian patriotism’ (Haney 1973, p.8). The fanning of the flames of official Russian nationalism in the Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko eras - during the main period of Putin’s career as a KGB officer - prepared the ground for the hegemony of great power nationalism in post-Soviet Russia.

Russian Orthodox fundamentalism drew its inspiration from the black hundreds, Russian great power nationalism, Soviet era anti-Zionist campaigns and the contemporary ‘red-white-brown’ coalition (Laruelle 2016). The Russian Orthodox Church has backed the canonisation of empire builders, glorified tyrannical Russian leaders (Engstrom 2014), equated the ‘Russian’ people with eastern Slavs and viewed the entire former USSR as its ‘canonical’ territory.

The Russian Orthodox Church has a long tradition of ultra-conservatism and anti-modernism, distrust of Western democracy and human rights, opposition to globalisation, and anti-Semitism (Besier 2017, p.230). Alexander Verkhovsky defines ‘Russian Orthodox Church fundamentalism’ through its promotion of a worldwide Jewish-Masonic conspiracy, antiSemitism and vitriolic rhetoric against Western liberalism and globalisation (Verkhovsky 2002). Anti-Western xenophobia does not exist within Ukrainian political culture and has never had a home in the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

Protecting the unity of ‘Holy Rus’

The myth of Kyiv Rus unity emerged in the modern era ‘under the influence of the imperial political design’ (Pritsak and Reshetar 1963, p.232). Edward L. Keenan (1994, p.22) points out that Muscovite rulers were ‘only dimly aware of the history of the Kievan period, and even less interested in claiming it as their inheritance.’ The Russian Orthodox Church as the guardian of a pan-Russian nation ‘stems from 19th-century nationalist inventions and has gained traction among Russian nationalists and Ukrainian separatists today’ (Kozelsky 2014, p.221; Plokhy 2017, p.331; Kushnir 2018, pp.83-85). Patriarch Kirill provided ‘spiritual legs and defined the Russian World along older, imperial lines’ (Kozelsky 2014, p.230). Putin integrated White Russian emigres and the emigre Russian Orthodox Church with contemporary Russia.

The Russian Orthodox Church’s function as the upholder of the unity of ‘Holy Rus’ has four important functions:

1 *History:* In Russian imperial historiography, Kyiv was the ‘Mother of Russian Cities’ and ‘Kievan Russia’ was the ‘first Russian state.’ These claims legitimised Russia’s claim to be the ‘leading’ nation of the eastern Slavs.

2 *Christianity:* The Russian Orthodox Church believes it has ownership over Ukraine because southern Ukraine and Crimea were the site of the Christianisation of ‘Kievan Russia’ in 988. Putin said, ‘Crimea and Sevastopol have invaluable civilisational and even sacred importance for Russia.’[6] The Russian Orthodox Church claims exclusive lineage to Kyiv Rus, a historical myth which is a means to lay claim to be the ‘Mother Church’ of Orthodox Churches in the former USSR and spiritual leader of eastern Slavic civilisation (Tonoyan and Payne 2010). Russian great power nationalists, and some Western scholars, believe the myth of a ‘1,000 years of Russian Orthodoxy’ (Putin 2015; see Petro 2015).

3 *Numbers and Finances:* Estimates varied between 40-66 percent of Russian Orthodox Church parishes were to be found in Soviet Ukraine prior to 1991 (Plokhy 2017, p.330; Wawrzonek 2014, p.766). The Soviet regime permitted a greater number of Russian Orthodox Church parishes to remain open in Soviet Ukraine in order to attract former Greek Catholics whose Church had been banned in 1946.

4 *Geopolitics*: Without canonical control over Ukraine, Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church lost their mythical claims of origin in Kyiv Rus and their status as the ‘leading’ nation of the eastern Slavs. Importantly, without Ukraine the Russian Orthodox Church is no longer the largest Church in the Orthodox world.

Andriy Fert (2020) provides an illuminating analysis of two competing schools in the Russian Orthodox Church which he described as ‘History of the Ukrainian Church’ and ‘History of Orthodox in Rus.’ The ‘History of the Ukrainian Church’ was promoted by Metropolitan Volodymyr which chartered an autonomous course for the ‘Ukrainian Church’ since 988 and viewed Ukraine as the cradle of Orthodox Rus. The ‘History of the Ukrainian Church’ avoided criticism of ‘nationalistic schismatics’ (such as those supporting autocephaly) and refrained from using concepts legitimising the unity of ‘Holy Rus’ (promoted by Kirill).

Metropolitan Volodymyr’s death in 2014, in the first year of the Russian-Ukrainian war, opened the door to the domination of the ‘History of Orthodox in Rus’ school endorsed by Patriarch Kirill. This school used the Kremlin’s discourse about a ‘civil war’ and agreed with Russian great power nationalism about an ‘artificial’ Ukraine and Ukrainians as one of three branches of the pan-Russian nation. The ‘History of Orthodox in Rus’ school supported the following four tenets (Fert 2020):

1 Legitimisation of the unity of ‘Holy Rus’ (Kyiv) with Moscow and St. Petersburg.

2 The eastern Slavs shared a ‘common Orthodox culture.’

3 The borders between the eastern Slavs were irrelevant because a ‘common spiritual civilisation’ united them that blurred distinctions between them.

4 Revived and strengthened five historical narratives from the Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko eras of the Soviet Union:

a The eastern Slavs have a common origin in the ‘first Russian state’ of ‘Kievan Russia.’

b Russians and Ukrainians have common historical fates which cannot be broken.

c The peoples of ‘Holy Rus’ have always been - and will always be -‘fraternal brothers.’

Between the downfall of Kyiv Rus in 1240 to the Treaty of Peryaslav in 1654, Ukrainians suffered during their separation from Russia. But the Ukrainian people were saved and their existence was revitalised following their ‘reunion’ with Russia and they flourished in the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union. e Separatism and Ukrainian nationalism are evil and treacherous, and supported by Western intrigues to break apart ‘(pan-)Russian’ unity.

The Russian Orthodox Church has intimate geopolitical and geospiritual ties to the Russian World. A cultural paradigm on the unity of ‘Holy Rus’ promotes the sacred, unbreakable unity of the eastern Slavs belonging to a unique Orthodox civilisation which has existed since ‘Kievan Russia.’ Russian Orthodox Church clergy promote the concept of Russians and Ukrainians as ‘one people of the same blood and faith’ (Shestopalets 2019 p.50).

The concept of ‘Holy Rus’ excludes by definition a Ukrainian nation separate to Russians, only permitting a Little Russian identity within a panRussian nation. The three eastern Slavs of ‘Holy Rus’ are the ‘peoples of historic Rus’ who were born together - and will always remain together in the Russian World. The Russian Orthodox Church therefore defines the Russian World as a contemporary Kyiv Rus through maintaining a 1,000-year-old bond of the eastern Slavs. Rus, ‘Russian,’ and *Russkii* are used interchangeably, thereby clouding the differences between Russians and Ukrainians. National Bolshevik and anti-Semite Glazyev said: ‘The civilization choice was made more than a thousand years ago’ (D’Anieri 2019, p.201); in other words, once made it could never be changed.

The Tsarist Russian imperial and White Russian emigre belief that Ukrainians constituted a branch of the pan-Russian nation had always been upheld by the Russian Orthodox Church because in doing so, it could, canonically, lay claim to Ukraine. Accepting Ukrainian autocephaly for

Ukraine would be the same as recognising Ukrainians are a separate nation to Russians. The Russian Orthodox Church and Putin are therefore virulently hostile to Ukrainian autocephaly. As Chapter 5 showed, great power nationalism in Putin's Russia transitioned from the Soviet concept of close but different 'fraternal' Russian and Ukrainian peoples towards embracing Tsarist Russian imperial and White Russian emigre views of eastern Slavs as a pan-Russian nation. After Putin's re-election in 2012, he and Kirill were on the same page about the 'gathering of Russian lands.'

Patriarch Kirill, Glazyev and Ukraine's most pro-Russian politician, Medvedchuk played central roles in Putin's 'gathering of Russian lands.' Putin is Godfather to Medvedchuk's daughter Daryna who was born in 2004, the same year as the Orange Revolution. Neil Buckley and Roman Olearchyk (2017) write: 'Many suspect him (Medvedchuk) of being Mr Putin's agent.' Zygar (2016, p.123) believed that Medvedchuk has long been the 'main source of information about what was happening in Ukraine.' Medvedchuk is the only person Putin has fully trusted in Ukraine and he is 'effectively Putin's special representative in Ukraine' (Zygar (2016, p.167). Medvedchuk 'shared some of the "Ukrainophobia" of Moscow officialdom' (Zygar 2016, p.84).

In spring 2012, not coincidentally just after Putin was re-elected, Medvedchuk launched the *Ukrayinskyy vybir - Pravo narodu* (Ukrainian Choice - Right of the People) Party which resembled more a 'front for the Kremlin than independent organization' (Hosaka 2018, p.341). In 2021, three members of Ukrainian Choice - Right of the People Party were charged with treason for assisting the referendum legitimising Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014.[7] In 20182019, Medvedchuk transitioned from the Ukrainian Choice - Right of the People Party to leading another Kremlin project, Opposition Platform - For Life Party (one of two successors to the discredited Party of Regions).

In summer 2013, Putin and Patriarch Kirill visited Ukraine where, together with Yanukovych, they celebrated the 1025th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity in Kyiv Rus. The focal point of their visit was the commemoration of the eternal unity of the eastern Slavs: 'It is thanks to the Baptism that we - Ukrainians, Russians, and Belarusians - were given the

name of Holy Rus' (Besier 2017, p.232). The celebrations promoted slogans such as 'We are One!', 'Unity for Slavic Peoples!' and 'Holy Rus is indivisible!' (Lutsevych 2016). In November 2015, participants in Russia's Unity Day state holiday held banners reading 'Russia, Ukraine and Belarus -together we are Holy Rus!' and 'Let's bring back the borders of the (Soviet) union!'[8] showing how Russians viewed the former as the core of the Tsarist Russian Empire and USSR.

Putin and Kirill spoke at Medvedchuk's conference on 'Orthodox-Slavic Values: The Foundation of Ukraine's Civilisation Choice' (Hosaka 2018, pp.342-343, 356-357). Putin said Ukraine's destiny was pre-determined when it had made its choice by being present 'at the foundations of this heritage' which forged the 'common spiritual values that make us a single people.' Christianisation of Kyiv Rus, in Putin's view, 'defined Russia's and Ukraine's spiritual and cultural development' because it created common 'Orthodox values,' history, culture and 'brotherhood' which could never be broken (Hosaka 2018, pp. 342, 356-357). For Putin and Kirill, the choice made by Ukraine 1,000 years ago was for eternity.

The Kremlin's hard-line position on the unbreakable unity of 'Holy Rus' translated into aggressive and 'high-handed attitudes and explicitly assertive words' (Hosaka 2018, p.348). D'Anieri (2019, p.264) writes that Putin 'put immense pressure' on Yanukovych not to sign the Association Agreement with the EU. In summer 2013, Ukraine was subjected to a trade boycott and demands for payment of its debts to Gazprom, coupled with a 'massive diplomatic offensive' which 'combined diplomacy, propaganda, economic pressure, and even the threat of military action' (Svoboda 2019, pp.1694, 1700). European integration into a 'decadent' Europe was incompatible with Ukraine's alleged choice to be with Russia made a millennium ago.

Putin and Kirill's elucidations about 'Holy Rus,' Ukraine and Ukrainians fuelled the 'red-white-brown' coalition in the 2014 crisis. Glazyev, although claiming insider knowledge of Ukraine because he was born in Zaporizhzhya, had in fact no understanding of the country because he drew upon Russian imperialistic and chauvinistic stereotypes and myths. Glazyev claimed, without any justification, that a majority of Ukrainians 'want to

live with Russia in one country' because, echoing Russian Orthodox Church leaders, the three eastern Slavs 'are one country except that state borders have now come between us, so we should do everything possible to remove these borders and reunite.'[9] Like all national Bolsheviks, Glazyev ignored the 'imagined community' that had been forged by Ukrainians living for seven decades within the confines of the Ukrainian SSR.

Russian great power nationalist descriptions of 'Kievan Russia' as the cradle of the eastern Slavs and the 'first Russian state' are only made possible if 'Russians' are equated with a pan-Russian nation and Ukrainians were conjured up by Western magicians. 'Ukraine is often presented as a historical mistake - a country that emerged by accident and that has no basis for its existence' (Lutsevych 2016). Ukrainians are squatters on 'ancient Russian land.' Although 'Russia' is a term first coined in 1721 the medieval principality of Kyiv Rus is always wrongly called 'Kievan Russia.' Glazyev claimed that 'no one disputes the elementary fact that contemporary Russia is, in fact, the continuation of Kyiv Rus' (D'Anieri 2019, p.201).

The Russian Orthodox Church's traditional exceptionalism and messian-ism was emboldened by Kirill (2009) and Putin's re-election (2012) and 'enhanced by the conflict in Ukraine' from 2014 (Curanovic 2019, p.263).

The Russian Orthodox Church upheld Putin's and Russian nationalist understanding of a 'civil war' between Ukrainians who see their home in the Russian World ('Russians') and those who do not ('fascist' western Ukrainians in the pay of the West). Wawrzonek (2014, p.769) writes that the Russian World 'assumes the need to make a choice - either Orthodox civilization or Western European civilization;' that is, the 'civil war' in Ukraine is over geopolitical loyalties. Wawrzonek (2014, p.769) believes that prior to the 2014 crisis there was no support in Ukraine for an 'ontological conflict' between these two geopolitical choices and Ukraine had to choose only in response to Russian military aggression. In a war you cannot sit on the fence.

The Russian Orthodox Church viewed the Russian state's support for its 'brothers' in eastern Ukraine as justified because this is 'the historical southern borders of Rus' (Bugriy 2015). Russia was defending - not attacking - the unity of the Russian World by protecting the 'brotherly'

unity of Russians and Ukrainians. Russia was defending ‘true Russians on true Russian land’ from persecution (Lewis 2020, pp. 545-547).

During the 2014 crisis and since, the Russian Orthodox Church supported the ‘reactionary, nationalist and isolationist turn in Putin’s Russia.’[10] A Moscow Congress held suspiciously in November 2013, the month when the Euromaidan Revolution began, brought together the Russian Orthodox Church and Cossacks who four months later would be occupying Crimea and fighting against Kyiv in the Donbas (Gonchar, Horbach and Pinchuk 2020, p.55). In Crimea and the Donbas, premises of the Russian Orthodox Church were used to store weapons ahead of the invasion of Crimea and war in the Donbas. Head of the Ministry of Veterans and SBU General-Major Yuliya Laputina witnessed Russian *spetsnaz* using the *Svyato-Uspenskyy Svyatohirskyy Lavry* (Holy Mountains Lavra of the Holy Dormition) in western Donetsk *oblast* as a weapons storage base in 2014.[11] The Russian Orthodox Church in the Donbas ‘actively supported’ the pro-Russian case even in comparison with other regions of south-eastern Ukraine (Nitsova 2021). Russian Orthodox Church clergy blessed Russian mercenaries travelling from Russia to fight in eastern Ukraine (Higgins 2014).[12] A Russian Orthodox priest blessed mercenaries heading to the Donbas with the words ‘I am a patriot of Russia and here (in Ukraine) live Slavs. These same *“Russkii”* as me.’[13] A Russian Orthodox priest in the Urals blessed Russian nationalists travelling to Ukraine to fight ‘fascist scum.’[14]

An investigation by the Russian independent *Meduza* (2020) investigative website analysed how the Russian Orthodox Church and Cossacks were formed into units in Krasnodar before being transported to Crimea to assist Russia’s invasion. In Crimea, Russian Orthodox clergy encouraged Ukrainian officers to surrender, including by issuing ultimatums to Ukrainian troops to lay down their weapons. Russian Orthodox clergy joined ‘selfdefence’ forces and Cossacks blockading military bases. After the illegal incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation, Russian Orthodox clergy were awarded medals by Putin and promoted in the Church.

Since 2014, the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine is split between the three territories of Ukraine, Crimea and Russian occupied DNR and LNR. The Russian Orthodox Church has wholeheartedly adopted the Kremlin's discourse on the Russian-Ukrainian war. The Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine has never condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea or military aggression in eastern Ukraine, instead describing the war as *mizhusobnoju* ('internecine') and *bratoubiistvennyi* ('fratricidal'); that is, repeating the Kremlin's discourse of a 'civil war.' The head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine Metropolitan Onufrii said that Ukraine is experiencing an 'internecine struggle,' and 'This is a civil war' that arose from a 'civilisa-tional chasm' (Shestopalets 2019, p.47). Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kyiv and All Ukraine, primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, criticised use of the term 'civil war' saying 'They (Russian Orthodox Church) have never described Russia as an aggressor (state.)'[15]

Russian Orthodox clergy have refused to hold funeral services for killed Ukrainian *siloviki*. They are also unwilling to join the clergy who are acting as chaplains with Ukrainian troops.[16] In May 2015, senior clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine demonstratively refused to stand in the Ukrainian parliament to honour soldiers who had died fighting for Ukraine (Stepanenko 2020, p.123).[17]

The Kremlin's discourse is also repeated when the Russian Orthodox Church accuses western Ukrainians of imposing their identity on the remainder of Ukraine. Onufrii described the roots of the Russian-Ukrainian war as the imposition of western Ukrainian values upon eastern Ukraine (Shestopalets 2019, p.47), giving legitimacy to the DNR and LNR as a genuine movement. This is a common Kremlin myth about western Ukrainians coming to power during the Euromaidan Revolution that is also propagated by some Western scholars (see the Preface). As Denys Shestopalets (2019, p.62) notes, the Russian Orthodox Church 'in effect legitimises the ideological agenda of the secessionist movement.' The Russian Orthodox Church believes - like the Kremlin - that post-Euromaidan Ukrainian authorities are puppets, a standpoint which 'fully accords with that of the Russian political regime' (Shestopalets 2019, p.62). As Western puppets, the Ukrainian authorities have launched a 'civil war' against their own citizens at their behest (Bugriy 2015).

Russian World

In the Russian language, *Mir* means both a Russian peasant commune and the world. What the Slavophiles of the 19th and 20th centuries hailed as unique and purely Russian, the *Mir* had acted as a brake to the further development of the Tsarist Russian Empire and Russian nation. In the *Mir* the whole weighs heavily on the individual who has little value and subordinates him or herself to the authoritarian order. Each member lives by the collective wisdom of the whole, with no room for the individual to express any initiative. No individual in the *Mir* holds convictions or any philosophy towards life, as demonstrated by Platon Karatayev in Lev Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace.*

The Russian World was first articulated in 1998 by the Foundation for Effective Policy in its proposals for developing new Russian policies towards the CIS. A year later a law on compatriots was adopted.[18] Upon being elected in 2000, Putin immediately acted on his 'obsession' with Ukraine and the following year he introduced the concept of a Russian World during his speech to the first congress of Compatriots Living Abroad. Putin described the Russian World as uniting those who cherished the Russian language and Russian Orthodoxy and defined the three 'brotherly' Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples as the core of the Russian World.

Valentina Feklyunina (2016, pp.783-784) provides four factors underpinning the Russian World:

1 *Naturally Existing Civilisation Community:* Based on a common Russian language, Russian Orthodoxy, mentality, traditions, and Russian culture. 'Holy Rus' represented the core of the Russian World uniting three 'brotherly' peoples who, although divided by 'artificial' borders, remain 'one people.'

2 *Soviet Historiography of a Common past*: Kyiv Rus was the foundation of the 'Russian' state from which Russians and Ukrainians descended. Breaking away from the Tsarist Russian empire, USSR, or Russian World is abnormal and treasonous.

3 *Hierarchy*: A Russo-centric world with Russians as the leading nation. Ukrainians and Belarusians naturally identify with Russia and look up to the Russian nation for ‘leadership’ and protection.

4 *Legitimise State-Societal Relations*: The Russian World is a unique civilisation which is distinct from and superior to Western values. Members of the Russian World should not copy the West but instead take their unique path together. Integration into Europe is a ‘betrayal’ of the Russian World.

These Russian Orthodox stereotypes and myths formulate six forms of discourse through which Russian political and religious leaders view Ukraine and Ukrainians: [1]

2 *Rus is not Russia:* The term ‘Russia’ only came into existence in 1721 with the founding of the Russian Empire and was *never* used in Kyiv Rus. Some Western historians, particularly those in Britain, continue to follow 19th century and Soviet historians in also wrongly conflating the terms ‘Russian’ and ‘Russians’ for Kyiv Rus (see Kuzio 2020, pp.9-35). Histories with ‘Kievan Russia’ (Kyiv Rus) as the beginning of ‘Russian history’ distract from the history of the Russian nation in Novgorod, Vladimir-Suzdal and Muscovy. Histories of Ukraine published in North America and Ukraine are written in the same manner as those published by historians in Europe; that is, everything which took place on the territory of the Ukrainian nation-state since 1991 is included in Ukrainian history. In this Western historical framework, Kyiv Rus is the beginning of Ukrainian history because it primarily took place on Ukrainian territory (see Subtelny 2000, pp.19-68; Magocsi 1996, pp.51-104; Magocsi 2010, pp.55-109; Plokhy 2015, pp.3-62). Russian, and some Western, historians conflate the Russian Empire as a Russian nation-state thereby adding to the confusion as to where the borders of the Russian ‘imagined community’ are drawn (see Kuzio 2020, pp.9-35).

3 *‘First Russian State':* If ‘Kievan Russia’ was the ‘first Russian state’ it is unclear and is never explained how Ukrainian interlopers and squatters came to subsequently live there? Did Ukrainians appear by accident because of foreign invasions and conspiracies? In such a framework, Ukrainians do not have a separate history to Russians and are an ‘accident’ of history.

4 *Kyiv is the 'Mother of Russian Cities':* In his speech welcoming Crimea's inclusion into Russia, Putin said 'we are one nation. Kyiv is the Mother of Russian Cities' (Pynnoniemi and Racz 2016, p.93; Denysenko 2014, p.246). Kyiv is over six centuries older than Moscow and it is never explained how Kyiv can be the 'mother' of something which was not yet born. Ukraine is the site of ancient ruins older than found in Stonehenge in England.[19] In 1982, the Soviet regime celebrated the 1,500th anniversary of the founding of Kyiv in 482 (Pritsak 1981). Moscow, founded in 1146, only existed for less than a century (94 years) of Kyiv Rus before its destruction by Mongol invaders in 1240. Putin's unveiling of a huge monument to Grand Prince Vladimir (Volodymyr) is therefore an oxymoron as he ruled Kyiv Rus in 980-1015 when Moscow did not exist. Orthodox Church of Ukraine Metropolitan Epiphanius explained the correct relationship: 'The Ukrainian Church is the mother of the Church in relation to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian Orthodox Church is the "daughter" of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.'[20] There you have it, in reality it is Ukrainians who are the elder brothers of the eastern Slavs.[21] In the 1990s, Russian politicians rejected a Ukrainian nationalist proposal for an eastern Slavic union with Kyiv as its capital city (Kuzio 1997, p.231). In the late 1980s and 1990s, Russian historians began articulating a history of Kyiv Rus which separated its southern (Ukrainian) and northern (Russian) branches in Kyiv and Novgorod and Lagoda respectively (Tolz 2002, pp.246-248). Novgorod, founded in 859862, was the centre of northern Kyiv Rus and the birthplace of the Russian people. But, such a post-imperial Russian history separate to Ukrainian, as proposed by the historian Hrushevsky over a century ago (see Chapter 2), is 'unusable' to Putin and great power nationalists who believe a pan-Russian nation created by 'Holy Rus' lies at the core of a Russian great power and Eurasian civilisation.

5 *Unity of Russians and Ukrainians:* The 300th and 325th anniversaries of the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav between Ukraine and Muscovy were officially celebrated by the Soviet regime in 1954 and 1979, respectively (Kasymenka 1954). In 2014, Russia took back its 1954 'gift.' Presumably, if we use the same analogy as a settlement arising from a marriage divorce, Russians and Ukrainians are no longer 'married.'

6 *Great Patriotic War:* This *de facto* religious cult is annually celebrated as a historical event which cemented the ‘eternal unity’ of the eastern Slavs (Domanska 2019). But the Bloodlands of Europe (Snyder 2010) did not include the majority of Russian SFSR territory - they were in Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. 16.3 percent of the Ukrainian population died in World War II compared to 12.7 percent of Russians. The Nazis completely occupied Poland, Ukraine and Belarus but only controlled a small part of the Russian SFSR. The Great Patriotic War ignores 19391941 during which eastern Poland was invaded by the Soviet Union and the Nazis were at war with other parts of Europe. For western Ukrainians therefore, the war began in 1939 and not in 1941. The Russian Orthodox Church joins with Putin’s regime in celebrating military victories and Stalin’s creation of a nuclear superpower and in so doing, downplays the enormous human tragedy of World War II. The 2015 decommunisation laws changed Ukraine from celebrating the Great Patriotic War in 1941-1945 to commemorating World War II in 1939-1945 (see Oliinyk and Kuzio 2021).

1

No Sovereignty: Claiming the entire USSR as Russian Orthodox Church ‘canonical’ territory is analogous to Russian great power nationalists demanding Eurasia be recognised as Russia’s exclusive sphere of influence. A sphere of influence is ‘hardwired into the “Russian World” imagery’ because ‘The Russian World is where Russians are’ (Suslov 2018, pp.4, 16). Russian religious and political leaders are not satisfied with a Russian civic identity and ‘imagined community’ grounded in the Russian Federation *and* instead view ‘Russia,’ the former USSR and Eurasia as one and the same.

Ukrainophobia

81 percent of Ukrainians (Rating Sociological Group 2021) are, understandably, negatively disposed towards Putin because of the occupation of Crimea and ongoing military aggression against their country. This should be understandable to all except *Putinversteher* scholars in the West. But why are Putin and Russian leaders so visibly angry with Ukrainians?

The roots of Russian anger lie in Ukrainian determination to defend its sovereignty and independence which is viewed in the Kremlin as an unfriendly act of 'separatism' from the Russian World. Russia is angry with Ukraine because its presidents do not pursue the eastern Slavic national identity policies found in Lukashenka's Belarus. In May 2021, Putin (2021) described Ukraine as 'some kind of polar opposite of Russia, some kind of anti-Russia.' Putin's Press Secretary, Peskov, complained that 'Ukraine is a sovereign state, which is unfriendly for us, we have drawn this conclusion judging by those anti-Russian steps, which have been constantly dominating the Ukrainian leadership's policy.' The 2014 coup d'etat turned Ukraine 'into a project of these Western countries.'[22]

Since the onset of the 2014 crisis, Russian information warfare has depicted Ukraine as chaotic, aggressive, unwilling to end the 'civil war,' discriminating against Russians and Russian speakers, and run by western Ukrainian nationalists and 'fascists' who are imposing their will on 'good (pro-Russian) Ukrainians' at the behest of Western governments (Getmanchuk and Fakhurdinova 2020). This has little to do with reality, especially following the election of Russian-speaking Jewish-Ukrainian Zelenskyy from eastern Ukraine. It is of course dismissed by those who view Ukraine through Soviet, White Russian emigre and Russian great power nationalist ('red-white-brown') stereotypes and myths and receive their news from state-controlled television in Russia.

At the same time, Russian great power nationalists hold a Jekyll and Hyde view of Ukraine and Ukrainians. 'True Russians' in Ukraine (understood as 'Russians' or 'Little Russians') allegedly wish to be part of the Russian

World. ‘Ukraine has thus been imagined as internal and external, sometimes an organic part of Russia’ populated by ‘true Russians’ and ‘sometimes as different and exotic,’ populated by Russophobic western Ukrainians (Edenborg 2017, p.298). ‘Good’ and ‘true’ (pro-Russian) Ukrainians are members of the eastern Slavic family and an integral part of pan-Russian identity and the pan-Russian nation. Although a state border divides Russians and Ukrainians they are in fact ‘one people.’ ‘Bad’ western Ukrainians who do not accept Russian leadership, eastern Slavic identity and the superiority of the Russian language are preventing ‘good’ Ukrainians from being part of the Russian World. Of course, none of this has anything to do with reality but nevertheless these outdated stereotypes and myths drive contemporary Russian military aggression against Ukraine.

Stereotypes and myths long held by the Russian Orthodox Church and adopted in the last two decades by Russa’s political leadership originate in Tsarist and Soviet historiographies and White Russian emigre writings and political programmes. The Soviet nationality policy goal of creating a *Homo Sovieticus* was premised on the Russification of Ukrainians and Belarusians and turning them into ‘Russians,’ a state of affairs which would return them to a situation that had allegedly existed in ‘Kievan Russia.’ The division of eastern Slavs was ‘unnatural’ and throughout history they had striven for ‘eternal unity’ (see Chapter 2).

Roman Solchanyk (1983, p.13) concluded that Soviet history writing about Ukrainians showed them as having ‘emerged on the face of the earth for the sole reason of “reuniting” with Russia and Russians.’ Again, we are back to the conclusion that Ukrainians are an ‘accident’ of history. This highly mythical understanding of Russian-Ukrainian history continues to be believed by Russians who claim that ‘Ukraine has never had a proper state’ (Pynnoniemi and Racz 2016, p.93).

Russia’s mythical history and eastern Slavic identity could never be used to build a Ukrainian nation state. Our discussion shows it is therefore wrong for Laruelle (2015, p.12) to claim the Russian World does not question the independence of Russia’s neighbours - it most certainly does in the case of Ukraine and Belarus. In seeking to return the three eastern Slavs to ‘normal unity under Russian leadership,’ the Russian Orthodox Church ‘draws from

a vision of the Russian World as a process of “gathering Russian lands”’ (Pynnoniemi and Racz 2016, p.94). The most important country to be ‘gathered’ is of course Ukraine because ‘Holy Rus’ was born in Kyiv, and ‘Little Russia’ is therefore the quintessential ‘ancient Russian land.’

Russia and Ukraine: separating fact from fiction

Ukraine was already a dissident in the Russian World prior to 2014 crisis (Wawrzonek 2014) and has since distanced itself further from it. Ukraine will not become part of the Russian World because there is no possibility of Russia withdrawing from Crimea or of Ukraine agreeing to Russian demands for a Donbas peace agreement. By spring 2021, Zelenskyy had in effect given up on negotiating a peace agreement with Putin, for whom compromise is anathema and capitulation to Russian demands is the order of the day. Former President Kuchma (2021), who negotiated with both Yeltsyn and Putin, said all Russian leaders seek to achieve ‘submission’ (i.e., capitulation) through a ‘complete victory so the enemy is left with nothing;’ meanwhile, the West seeks a ‘win-win’ outcome where both sides agree and seek compromise.

Without Ukraine the Russian World is incomplete because the myths of Russia’s origins are allegedly to be found in Kyiv, ‘the mother of Russian cities.’ Without Ukraine’s participation, ‘Holy Rus’ no longer has a foothold in Kyiv and Elizaveta Gaufman (2020, p.61) asks: ‘How can Holy Russia or the Russian World continue if a significant part of it does not want anything to do with Russia?’ Russia is therefore set to continue to fight a 21st-century war based on 19th- and early 20th-century imperialist stereotypes and myths of Ukraine. Returning to the Russian World would require Ukraine to switch to implementing eastern Slavic identity policies, as in Lukashenka’s Belarus, which would mean the jettisoning of three decades of Ukrainian nation building. Until the Kremlin understands that Ukraine will not become ‘Belarus-2,’ the Russian-Ukrainian war will continue.

Russian-speaking Ukrainian patriots showed they did not want to become a ‘Belarus-2’; if they had supported pro-Russian policies in 2014 the ‘New Russia’ project would have succeeded. In the USSR, south-eastern

Russianspeaking Ukrainians were able to live with a ‘close but different’ relationship with ‘brotherly’ and ‘fraternal’ Russians. But opinion polls since 2014 have shown a majority of Ukrainians will never accept that they are a ‘Little Russian’ branch of a pan-Russian nation. A large majority of Ukrainians view themselves as patriots of their country and hold civic or ethno-cultural identities, or identities combining both elements. 81 percent of Ukrainians would vote positively in a referendum on independence, including 72 and 68 percent in the South and East, respectively (Rating Sociological Group 2020a). 85 percent of Ukrainians consider themselves to be patriots, a high figure which is similar in every region of the country. 59 percent of Ukrainians are ready to take up arms to defend Ukraine if it is militarily attacked (Rating Sociological Group 2020b).

72 percent of Ukrainians support Crimea returning to Ukraine as the autonomous republic that had existed prior to 2014, or as a Crimean Tatar autonomous republic. 79 percent (66 percent in the South and 57 percent in the East) of Ukrainians support the Donbas returning to the same status it had prior to 2014 with only 10 percent supporting the DNR and LNR receiving a ‘special status’ in the constitution (International Republican Institute and Rating Sociological Group 2021; see Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2019).

There are seven reasons why Ukraine is disinterested in participating in the Russian World.

1 *Lack of Resonance:* The Russian World did not strike a chord among Ukrainians even prior to the 2014 crisis (Wawrzonek 2014) and this is even more the case since then. In 2013, 19 percent of Ukrainians had heard of the Russian World, an increase of only 2 percent during Yanukovych’s pro-Russian presidency. During this same period, the number of Ukrainians who believed the Russian World was an attempt to rebuild a Russian empire grew from 30.4 to 48.4 percent of Ukrainians while those who viewed it as maintaining spiritual unity of the eastern Slavs declined from 56.8 to 39.7 percent (Razumkov Centre 2013). Ukrainians view the Russian World as a reincarnation of the USSR and an arm of the Russian state (Gaufman 2020, p.64).

2 *Soft and Hard Power:* Russian hybrid warfare merges ‘soft power activities with hard power goals’ which ‘undermines the plausibility and appeal of the former’ (Rutland 2016, p.409). Russian information warfare denigrating ‘bad Ukrainians’ and derisory chauvinistic depictions of Ukraine are part and parcel of the Kremlin’s overall hybrid war (Kuzio 2020, pp.82-105). Ukrainians, irrespective of their regional origins, view the Russian World as propagandistic, linked to Russian geopolitical goals, obtrusive, arrogant, chauvinistic and lacking credibility (Hudson 2015, pp.341-343).

3 *Russian Leaders*: Russia’s political (Putin) and religious (Kirill) senior leaders promoting the Russian World are negatively viewed by a large majority of Ukrainians. Since 2014, between 70 and 81 percent of Ukrainians have held negative views of Putin (Rating Sociological Group 2019, 2021). Patriarch Kirill was trusted by only 15 percent and distrusted by 45 percent of Ukrainians. More Ukrainians distrusted Kirill than trusted him, even in southern (29.9 and 14.1 percent, respectively) and eastern (34.2 and 20.3 percent,) Ukraine. The Razumkov Centre (2018, p.8) explained: ‘the main factor in the decline in trust in him (Kirill) is open support of the Moscow Patriarchate and personally the Patriarch for Russian Federation aggressive actions against Ukraine.’

4 *Attitudes towards Russia:* Russia’s autocratic and kleptocratic regime is unattractive to Ukrainians. Only 1 percent of young Ukrainians support their country adopting the ‘Russian model of development’ (Kulchytskyy and Mishchenko 2018, p.183). 69-71 percent of Ukrainians opposed the ‘Russian model of development’ throughout Ukraine, including 56 percent of Russian speakers. This widespread opposition is an outgrowth of Russia associated with ‘aggression’ (65.7 percent), ‘cruelty’ (56.9 percent), and ‘dictatorship’ (56.9 percent).[23]

5 Ukrainians holding positive views of Russia have collapsed by two-thirds since the 2014 crisis. Russians who believed relations with Ukraine were poor also plummeted from 27 percent in 2012 to 59 percent five years later (Levada Centre 2017). In 2021, 41 percent of Ukrainians held favourable, and 42 percent negative views of Russia (Kyiv International Institute of

Sociology 2021). In a different survey, even fewer (32 percent) Ukrainians held a favourable view of Russia (Huang and Cha 2019).

6 *'Civil' and 'Fratricidal' war?:* Russian political leaders describe what is taking place in the Donbas as a 'civil war' while the Russian Orthodox Church call it a 'fratricidal' war. The two terms deny the presence of Russian *siloviki* in Ukraine. The majority of Russian speakers in Ukraine are patriots and they do not differentiate between themselves and Ukrainian speakers. Therefore, only a very small minority of them believe the Russian-Ukrainian war is a 'civil war' and 'fratricidal' conflict between 'good' 'Little Russians' and 'bad' western Ukrainians who support and oppose the Russian World, respectively.

Conclusions

Traditionally, the Russian Orthodox Church has displayed hostility to Ukrainian religious confessions, Ukrainian national identity and independence from Russia. The Russian Orthodox Church gained from the destruction of Ukrainian Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches by the Tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union, and has continued to close its eyes to their repression in the Russian Federation, Russian occupied Crimea and the Donbas. The Russian Orthodox Church upholds Russian White emigre denials of the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians and believes Ukraine belongs to 'Holy Rus.' The unification of the two branches of the Russian Orthodox Church, reburial of White Russian emigres and the propagation of their writings cemented these chauvinistic views within the Russian political and religious leadership.

The annexation of Crimea and occupation of a third of the Donbas created a dilemma for the Russian Orthodox Church because sitting on the fence is impossible during a war. The Russian Orthodox Church chose to support Putin by refusing to bury Ukrainian *siloviki* who had been killed in the Russian-Ukrainian war, not standing in their honour in the Ukrainian parliament, never condemning Russia's annexation and military aggression, and using Kremlin 'civil war' discourse when calling it 'internecine' and 'fratricide.' All three terms purposefully deny Russian military involvement in Ukraine.

The demands of Russian political and religious leaders for Ukraine's return to the Russian World are *incompatible* with Ukrainian nation building conducted over three decades since 1991. They would only be *compatible* if Ukraine regresses into a 'Belarus-2' and implements eastern Slavic identity policies akin to those undertaken in the former USSR and Lukashenka's Belarus. Ukrainian opinion polls and changes in identity in south-eastern Ukraine suggest this will never happen. Suspicion in and unpopularity of the Russian World was already evident prior to the 2014 crisis and has grown since (Wawrzonek 2014, p.770; O'Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016; Lutse-vych 2016). Orthodox autocephaly is the equivalent of Ukraine instituting divorce proceedings with the Russian World.

Russian nationalist stereotypes and myths about Ukraine cannot fathom the concept of Russian speaking Ukrainian patriotism (see Chapter 8); presumably, they had never travelled outside Russia and visited Canada, Austria, Scotland and Ireland which speak the same language as their neighbours. Prior to the 2014 crisis in Ukraine the belief that Ukrainians constituted a branch of a pan-Russian nation only existed amongst marginal and electorally unpopular Russian nationalist separatists in Crimea and Donbas who were only able to come to power with the assistance of the Russian state, Russian *siloviki*, and Russian nationalist mercenaries. Former DNR Prime Minister Aleksandr Zakharchenko was at least honest when he defined a future Ukraine which had re-integrated the DNR and LNR as *Malorossiia* (Little Russia).[24] Unfortunately for Zakharchenko and Russian leaders, most south-eastern Ukrainians do not consider themselves to be 'Little Russians' and the small minority who do are in power in the DNR and LNR. How Russian nationalists were brought to power in Crimea and the DNR and LNR is the subject of Chapter 8.

Notes

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8 Russia’s ‘Jerusalem’

Crimea and ‘New Russia’

Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. This is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptised. His spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea. This is also Sevastopol - a legendary city with an outstanding history, a fortress that serves as the birthplace of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet.

In people’s hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia. This firm conviction is based on truth and justice and was passed from generation to generation, over time, under any circumstances, despite all the dramatic changes our country went through during the entire 20th century.

Then, in 1954, a decision was made to transfer the Crimean Region to Ukraine, along with Sevastopol, despite the fact that it was a federal city... It was only when Crimea ended up as part of a different country that Russia realised that it was not simply robbed, it was plundered.

President Vladimir Putin (2014)

Prior to 2014, Russia faced a conundrum over Crimea and Sevastopol. Russia could accept Ukrainian sovereignty and develop good relations with Kyiv or Russia could harbour territorial irredentism towards Crimea and Sevastopol and have poor Russian-Ukrainian relations. Russia chose the latter course, harbouring territorial pretensions throughout the period 1991-2013 and in 2014 invading Crimea and, for the first time in Europe since World War II, annexing foreign territory. Crimea’s occupation represents an insurmountable obstacle to a comprehensive peace agreement and therefore normalisation of Russian-Ukrainian relations. High majorities in Russia support annexation while high majorities in Ukraine oppose annexation.

Only 7 percent of Ukrainians are willing to recognise Russian sovereignty over Crimea in return for peace in the Donbas, and a mere 3 percent are willing to recognise Crimea as Russian outright (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2021).

Crimea supported Ukrainian independence in the December 1991 referendum. Separatism in Crimea was weak throughout the period until the end of Kuchma's presidency in 2004. Meanwhile, no opinion poll showed majority support for separatism in Crimea prior to 2014 (here understood as combining the desire to unite Crimea with Russia and create an independent state). President Kuchma, an eastern Ukrainian, was tougher than his western Ukrainian predecessor Kravchuk towards Crimean separatists, abolishing the Crimean presidency and consigning them to the margins of political life. From 2005, the Party of Regions - with Russia acting as a facilitator -brought Crimean Russian nationalists back from the margins to the centre of Crimean political life where they remained until assisting Russia's annexation. Separatists would have never been able to separate Crimea from Ukraine without internal support or neutrality from the pro-Russian Party of Regions and external overt and covert support from Russia.

Putin's 'New Russia' project failed because Ukrainians had little understanding of what this entity represented and south-eastern Ukrainians looked at it 'for what it was - an imperial political narrative' (Stebelsky, 2018, p.44). Support for separatism was always weak in six of the eight *oblasts* of southeastern Ukraine outside the Donbas (see Kuzio, Zhuk and D'Anieri 2021). In the Donbas separatism was supported by a third of the population willing to use violence to achieve its goals (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2018, 2019; Nitsova 2021). Kharkiv was capital of Soviet Ukraine between 1922 and 1934 and this most likely influenced it having the second highest level of support for separatism after the Donbas, although it was only 16 percent. In the Donbas, support was divided between 4.7 percent backing independence, 18.2 percent preferring incorporation into Russia and 8.7 percent wanting the Donbas to exist in a federal union with Russia, or a total of 31.6 percent (Stebelsky 2018; Nitsova 2021). In the Donbas, 31.6 percent of Russians, but only 11 percent of those with a dual Russian-Ukrainian identity, supported separatism;

ethnic Ukrainian support was even lower. Elise Giuliano (2018) concluded a majority of Russians, Ukrainians and those holding a Russian-Ukrainian identity did not support separatism in the Donbas. Outside the Donbas and Kharkiv support for separatism in south-eastern Ukraine was miniscule. Mikhail Golubev, a resident of Odesa, said Putin 'miscalculated, thinking that because we are Russian speakers, we want to rejoin a new Russian empire' (Olearchyk 2015).

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first surveys the Crimean question in Russian-Ukrainian relations between the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 and the end of Kuchma's presidency in 2004. The second analyses the Kremlin-brokered alliance of the Party of Regions and Crimean Russian nationalists (understood as separatists) from 2005-2006. The third investigates how the Kremlin prepared for future conflict with Ukraine in the island of Tuzla, Donbas and the Georgian region of South Ossetia. The fourth section analyses Russian triumphalism with the election of Yanukovych in 2010 and the manner in which his presidency impacted upon Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet. The final section investigates why the 'New Russia' project failed and analyses the Russian nationalist and authoritarian political system in the DNR and LNR.

Russian liberals and nationalists support territorial claims

In the 1990s practically all Russian politicians supported territorial claims towards Crimea and Sevastopol. The Russian Supreme Soviet and Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the 1954 transfer of Crimea to Ukraine in a resolution adopted as early as 23 January 1992 in the first month of Russian independence. The appeal elicited a strong protest from Ukraine which pointed out that it violated Ukrainian-Russian treaties and CIS agreements. Vice President Rutskoi visited Crimea in April 1992 and called for its secession from Ukraine.

In May 1992, the Russian Supreme Soviet passed a resolution declaring the 1954 transfer of Crimea 'illegal,' leading again to Ukrainian protests. A Ukrainian parliamentary appeal in response to the Russian resolution stated

that it had ‘no legal significance and no legal consequences for Ukraine.’ Twelve factions in the Russian Supreme Soviet demanded Sevastopol become the main base for the Black Sea Fleet, be accorded a special status and removed from under Ukrainian sovereignty.

Moscow Mayor Luzhkov was the most vocal advocate of Russian territorial claims towards Crimea and Sevastopol.[1] Luzhkov, who by all accounts like Putin had never studied international law, claimed Sevastopol had never been transferred to Ukraine in 1954 alongside the Crimea and had continued to possess all-union jurisdiction. Sevastopol was ‘Russian land. It has always been and always will be Russian land,’ Luzhkov wrote.[2] Luzhkov said, ‘Sevastopol was never transferred to Ukraine by any document, even in Khrushchev’s time, when he, in a drunken state, transferred Crimea.’[3] Luzhkov stuck to this position throughout the 23 years from 1991 to 2014 - even during Yanukovych’s presidency.

According to Luzhkov, 85 percent (on another occasion he said 78 percent[4]) of the Crimean population are ‘Russians,’ reflecting his Russian great power nationalist discourse of a pan-Russian nation which became dominant in the 2000s. ln reality Russians accounted for 65 percent in the 1989 Soviet and 58 percent in the 2001 Ukrainian censuses of the population of Crimea. Luzhkov, similar to all Russian great power nationalists, defined compatriots as ‘Russians’ which meant his inflated figure included Russian-speaking Ukrainians.

Typically for great power nationalists, Luzhkov exaggerated the alleged threat from Ukrainianisation. Luzhkov warned that ‘There must be no forced Ukrainianisation of Russian people torn apart from their Motherland. Russian people want to speak their own language and teach their children Russian history and Russian literature.’[5] With only a handful of Ukrainian-language schools and media outlets in Crimea the very idea of a threat from Ukrainianisation was laughable.

In July 1993, the Russian parliament declared Russian jurisdiction over Sevastopol. Similar appeals, resolutions and statements by Russian state institutions and politicians continued to grow after the 1993 ‘red-brown’ coup d’etat and the transition in 1994-1996 to a Eurasianist identity in

Russian identity and security policy. New resolutions adopted in 1996 laying claim to Ukrainian territory built upon a long list of these earlier claims. The October 1996 vote declaring Sevastopol to be exclusively Russian territory was supported by a unanimous vote of 282 deputies with none opposed. By then Russian liberals had become as extinct as dinosaurs, with many having transformed into nationalists. The centrist Our Home is Russia Party, Yeltsin's then 'party of power,' voted with the Russian nationalists and the KPRF on this and many other issues to provide constitutional majorities in favour of hard-line policies towards Ukraine.

Russian liberalism ended at Ukraine's borders when it came to Crimea and Sevastopol. The Crimean question was a major obstacle for all shades of Russian political opinion in developing good Russian-Ukrainian relations.

Russian nationalism (separatism) in Crimea

In the 1990s not every political force in Crimea supported pro-Russian separatism. During Kravchuk's and Kuchma's presidencies (1991-2004) three political groups in Crimea opposed separatism:

1 *Communists:* The regional branch of the KPU.

2 *Liberals:* Russian democratic organisations united in the Citizen's Forum and Democratic Crimea movement, although they were relatively weak and possessed few resources. As in the Russian Federation, Russian liberals in Crimea were never an influential political force.

3 *Pragmatic Centrists:* The local 'party of power,' the Party of Economic Revival of Crimea (PEVK), opposed separatism, supported Ukraine transformed into a federation and promoted closer CIS integration and the 'restoration of broken ties' with Russia.[6]

As in the Donbas so too in Crimea, Russian nationalists were aggressive in the pursuit of their separatist goals (Kuzio 2015, p.277). The main organisation in the push for a referendum on Crimea's future status, the *Respu-blikanskoye dvizheniye Kryma* (Republican Movement of Crimea - RDK), was founded a day after Ukraine declared independence on 24 August 1991 as a broader front for *Respublikanska partiia Krymu*

(Republican Party of Crimea - RPK). These political forces had emerged from the 'Russian Party' in the former Soviet Communist Party. The RDK was led by senior Communists and veterans from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, many of whom were employed in businesses such as Impeks-55 which had been established with funds laundered by the Communist Party.[7] In cooperation with other pro-Soviet and pro-Russian political forces in Crimea, the RDK repeatedly petitioned the Kremlin to declare its sovereignty over Crimea or, at the very least, Sevastopol.[8]

The Republican Movement of Crimea/Republican Party of Crimea, RPK and the *Front natsionalnogo spaseniia* (National Salvation Front -FNS) were xenophobic and, similar to their counterparts in the Donbas, Ukrainophobic.[9] The RPK held its inaugural congress under Soviet, Russian nationalist and Tsarist monarchist flags which reflected their ideological alignment with the 'red-brown' backers of the 1993 Russian coup d'etat and the broadened 'red-white-brown' coalition during Putin's presidency.

Ukrainophobic tendencies were also present at the founding congress of the *Russkaia obshchina Kryma* (Russian Community of Crimea - ROK), the local branch of KRO. A report on its 1997 annual congress gave the following harrowing description: 'The congress was neither peaceful nor strained, and not even respectful. It transformed into an already traditional hysterical anti-Ukrainian show densely mixed up with dirty politics and dangerous insinuations tinged with elements of extremism.'[10] FNS leaders called for armed struggle against Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and for Sevastopol to become the launch pad for the revival of the USSR. 'The main goal of communists and patriots is to disintegrate Ukraine, and only then will it join the new (Soviet) Union,' Aleksandr Kruglov argued at a meeting of the Bloc of Left Forces of Sevastopol.[11] In calling for Ukraine's dismemberment, Kruglov was four years ahead of Dugin's book *Foundations of Geopolitics* and 21 years ahead of the 'New Russia' project.

The transformation of the RPK into the *Soiuz* (Union) Party was required by the adoption of the 1996 Ukrainian Constitution which made regional parties illegal. *Souiz* was led by Vladimir Klychnikov who also chaired the Union of Afghan Veterans. *Soiuz* campaigned for Ukraine's membership of

the Russian-Belarusian union, the Russian language to be upgraded to an ‘official language’ and for Russians to be recognised as a second titular nation in Ukraine.

Similar to their counterparts in the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition, Crimean Russian nationalists supported Ukraine becoming ‘Belarus-2’ by adopting eastern Slavic identity policies found in Lukashenka’s Belarus (see Shulman 2005; Loshkariov and Sushentsov 2018). Ukraine’s legislation on ‘Indigenous Peoples’ adopted in summer 2021 refutes that ‘Crimea was always Russian’ by denying that Russians are one of its indigenous people.[12]

Kremlin brokers Party of Regions-Crimean Russian nationalist alliance: 2005-2006

Six factors changed after Kuchma left office in 2004. From 2005 the Party of Regions, a leftist, populist and pro-Russian political party led by oligarchs and supported by former Communist voters established a monopoly of power in south-eastern Ukraine and Crimea (Kudelia and Kuzio 2015; Kuzio 2015). During Kuchma’s presidency more moderate centrist parties had dominated south-eastern Ukraine and Crimea (Kuzio 2015, pp. 161-212).

Pro-Kuchma centrist parties were led by Ukrainian patriots, they were anticommunist, tough towards Crimean separatism and critical of Russian irredentism towards Crimea and Sevastopol. The Party of Regions did not support any of these four policies.

In 2005 the Party of Regions and the United Russia Party signed a cooperation agreement - a step pro-Kuchma centrist parties would never have undertaken. Russian political technologist Zatulin brokered an electoral alliance between the Party of Regions and the Russian nationalists in Crimea. After Kuchma left office, his ‘party of power,’ the *Narodno-Demokratychna Partiya* (Peoples Democratic Party - NDP) became marginalised after losing its presidential sponsor. The KPU, the second largest political force in Crimea, was transformed into a satellite political

force of the Party of Regions by virtue of the fact that its power base was also in Donetsk (Kuzio 2015, p.200).

The decline and co-option of Crimea's two main political forces opened up a political vacuum which the Party of Regions exploited. After being marginalised during the previous decade, Crimean Russian nationalists received a boost when the Party of Regions united with the *Blok Rossiia* (Russia Bloc) to create the electoral alliance *Blok 'Za Yanukovycha!'* (For Yanukovych bloc) to fight the 2006 Crimean Supreme Soviet elections. The Russia Bloc brought together three extremist political forces: *Russko-Ukraiinskij Soiuz* (Rus-Ukrainian Union), *Soiuz*, and *Za Russkoie iedinstvo* (For Russian Unity), previously called *Za Rus iedynu* (For a United Rus), names that reflected them buying into Tsarist and Soviet historical myths of 'Kievan Russia' and a pan-Russian nation. The Russia Bloc defended the rights of 'compatriots' in Ukraine. Pro-Kuchma centrists would have never formed an election bloc with Crimean Russian nationalists.

The Russia Bloc's nationalist programme opposed quotas in the Crimean Supreme Soviet for Tatars, and demanded the recognition of Russians as a second titular (indigenous) ethnic group in Ukraine; in other words, the 'Belar-usianisation' of Ukraine. Two even more radical alternatives to the extremist Russia Bloc were the *Narodnyj front 'Sevastopol-Krym-Rossiia'* (Peoples Front 'Sevastopol-Crimea-Russia') established on the eve of the 2006 Crimean elections by 12 pro-Russian organisations, and *Za Soiuz Ukrainy, Belorussii i Rossii* (For the Union of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia - ZUBR) which was active in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova and mainly drawn from national Bolshevik members of their four Communist Parties. Ivan Symonenko, head of the Russian-Ukrainian Union, was also a leading member of the ZUBR group. ZUBR had 130 deputies in the 1999-2003 State Duma and a similar number in the 1998-2002 Ukrainian parliament.

The Party of Regions had opened a Pandora's Box by providing legitimacy and parliamentary seats to political forces who denied the very existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians. All three members of the Russia Bloc viewed Ukrainians as a branch of the pan-Russian nation by equating 'Russians' with eastern Slavs.

A cable sent by the US Embassy in Ukraine pointed out that the Party of Regions had given the Russia Bloc excessive political prominence by electing them seats they would never have won on their own (Wikileaks 2006; Wikileaks 2007). Russian nationalist goals and separatism were unpopular in Crimea until 2004: in the March 2002 elections to the Ukrainian parliament, the Russia Bloc came third in the city of Sevastopol with 8.86 percent and fifth in Crimea with 4.76 percent. Crimeans preferred to vote for Communists rather than Russian nationalists. These election results showed to what degree political entrepreneurs (Party of Regions) and Russian external interference were central in expanding the reach and electoral popularity of hitherto marginal Russian nationalists in the decade prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea. The Party of Regions brought Russian nationalists out of marginalisation because this was the only manner in which they could spread their influence into Crimea providing a ready-made fifth column for Putin to use in the peninsula's annexation.

During the first critical juncture (see the Preface and Chapter 5), the Kremlin targeted south-eastern Ukraine and Crimea through active measures, policies that are surprisingly ignored by Tetyana Malyarenko and Stefan Wolff (2019, pp.16-17, 24) in their study of the Donbas. Anti-Maidan protests in the Donbas in spring 2014 were not 'spontaneous;' they had been nurtured over the previous decade (see below). Russian citizen Viktor Demyanenko, head of the Donetsk branch of the Great Host of Don Cossacks, was denied entry into Ukraine because he had been establishing an illegal paramilitary group.[13]

In the decade prior to 2014, when the Party of Regions was in bed with separatists in Crimea, Russian nationalist and Eurasianist youth groups, such as *Nashi* and the Eurasian Youth Union, spread Russian nationalistic activity into south-eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Annual NATO-Ukraine joint military manoeuvres had been taking place unhindered during Kuchma's presidency. But from 2005, a combination of Party of Regions indifference and support and Russian covert activities promoted and financed anti-NATO and anti-American rallies by the *Prohresyvna sotsialistychna partiya* (Progressive Socialist Party), Crimean Russian nationalists and Russian nationalist youth groups.

The Black Sea Fleet was never just a naval force as its personnel were involved in separatist activities, especially intelligence officers. In 2014, the Black Sea Fleet provided forces to back up the 'Little Green Men' (GRU *spetsnaz)* who had invaded Crimea from Russia. Putin (2014) admitted that:

Russia's Armed Forces never entered Crimea; they were there already in line with an international agreement. True, we did enhance our forces there; however - this is something I would like everyone to hear and know - we did not exceed the personnel limit of our Armed Forces in Crimea, which is set at 25,000, because there was no need to do so.

After the disintegration of the USSR, the Black Sea Fleet continued to publish the *Flag Rodiny* (Flag of the Motherland) newspaper and operate a television centre whose programmes were re-broadcast by Crimean television and radio. From 2005 the involvement of Russian Black Sea Fleet personnel in Russian active measures in Crimea was blessed by the Kremlin and assisted by Russian intelligence agencies. Personnel camouflaged in civilian attire actively participated in various forms of Russian nationalist activities in Crimea, including anti-NATO rallies, acting in effect in the same manner as the 'political tourists' bussed into eastern Ukraine in spring 2014. In both cases the aim was to increase the numbers of local protestors.

Ukrainian military intelligence intercepted communications between the Black Sea Fleet and 810th Brigade commanders 'to change from brigade into civilian uniform.'[14] The Black Sea Fleet 'provides one of the mightiest tools of Russian influence on the situation in the peninsula' and its very presence 'strongly promotes Russian interests' (Razumkov Centre 2009). The Black Sea Fleet 'possesses appropriate intelligence and special propaganda units, pursues an active campaign reinforcing historical memory and, as we noted above, information policy' (Razumkov Centre 2009).

Ukrainian presidential decrees issued in August 2008 were designed to restrict the movement of Black Sea Fleet personnel outside their bases and give advance notice of their itineraries after leaving their Sevastopol base (Yushchenko 2008). Russia refused to abide by these Ukrainian presidential

decrees towards the Black Sea Fleet as it never believed it should respect Ukrainian sovereignty over Sevastopol.

Sowing the seeds of future conflict

Tuzla 2003 - Crimea 2014 - Azov Sea 2018

By 1999, both houses of the Russian parliament had ratified the 1997 Russian-Ukrainian treaty, but it took another five years for both sides to complete the delimitation of their land border. These legal documents did not prevent Russian active measures or Russian irredentism towards Crimea; in fact, Russia's policies towards Crimea toughened during Putin's first term in office.

A crisis erupted in autumn 2003 at a time when relations between Kuchma and Putin were still relatively good. Perhaps Putin was testing Ukrainian military readiness to fight for its territorial integrity? The most likely explanation was that Russian aggression was meant to pressure Kyiv to agree to the Azov Sea being designated in accordance with Russian demands (see below).

Russia began building a dam from the Northern Caucasus to the Ukrainian island of Tuzla which, although uninhabited, occupied a strategic location to the east of Crimea. Kuchma returned from a state visit to Latin America to oversee the deployment of border troops and Interior Ministry special forces to Tuzla, as well as placing air defences on high alert in the Kerch Strait. Ukraine's show of strength halted Russia's construction.

President Kuchma mobilised support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and received strong backing from the majority of political forces in parliament, except the KPU. During Kuchma's presidency the pro-Russian Party of Regions had to follow the president's line and could not act on its more authentic pro-Russian position. Yanukovych was also then prime minister and expected to be Kuchma's official candidate in the 2004 presidential elections.

A Ukrainian parliamentary delegation visited the island of Tuzla to check its defences and border fortifications. On 14 October 1993 the Ukrainian

parliament issued a strongly worded appeal condemning Russia's actions (Ukrainian Parliament 2003a). A tougher, lengthier resolution was adopted by the Ukrainian parliament on 23 October threatening to take the issue to the UN Security Council (Ukrainian Parliament 2003b). The appeal stated:

Recent events related to the situation in the Kerch Strait have caused serious concern in Ukrainian society. Construction by the Russian side of a dam in the direction of the Ukrainian island of Tuzla, which began without prior notification and coordination with the relevant state bodies of Ukraine, may violate the spirit of good neighbourly relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

Construction of a dam in the Kerch Strait can complicate the process of delimitation of the border in the Azov Sea, carrying with it the threat of unpredictable environmental consequences which neither Russia nor Ukraine can remain indifferent.

The Supreme Council of Ukraine (Ukrainian Parliament) calls on the Russian Federal Assembly to intervene in the situation with a view to an immediate end to any unilateral actions that contradict the principles of good neighbourliness and the spirit of strategic partnership between our states and which may be aimed at violating the state sovereignty of Ukraine and its territorial integrity.

It is in our common interest to solve problems in Ukrainian-Russian relations in the spirit of cooperation, trust and mutual respect, to maintain the traditionally friendly ties between ours peoples.

If the mentioned works in the Kerch Strait continue further, the Supreme Council of Ukraine reserves the right to initiate all measures provided by international law aimed at the preservation of Ukraine's sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

(Ukrainian Parliament 2003a)

Kuchma supported the division of the Azov Sea's shelf and waters into Ukrainian and Russian sectors. Putin preferred to maintain the Azov Sea as a joint internal sea. The Russian military threat to Tuzla was Putin's

strategy to pressure Ukraine to agree to the Azov Sea being designated as a joint internal sea. Russia demanded that the Azov Sea and Kerch Strait be maintained as a 'single economic and natural complex jointly used in the interests of Russia and Ukraine,'[15] without the Azov Sea being divided and opened up to other countries.[16]

In 2003, a treaty was signed on the Azov Sea based on Russian demands, a mistake which was seen to be disadvantageous to Ukraine 15 years later and laying the seeds for the 2018 Russian-Ukrainian naval clash. As seen after Russia's military aggression in 2014 and since, the 2003 Azov Sea treaty was as worthless as every other treaty and agreement Ukraine had signed with Russia. As there was no rule of law inside Russia it would be foolhardy to believe that the Kremlin would respect international law. The building of a bridge across the Kerch Strait, Russia's naval piracy and frequent blockades of the Azov Sea infringed the 2003 treaty.

The 2003 treaty on the Azov Sea became important after Crimea's annexation in 2014 as a means for Putin to stranglehold the economy of south-eastern Ukraine. Russia's annexation of Crimea was followed by the building of a bridge across the Kerch Strait cutting across the entrance to the Azov Sea and providing Russia with a chokehold over shipping sailing to and from southern Donetsk *oblast.*

In November 2018, FSB *siloviki* attacked and captured three Ukrainian vessels and 24 crew members.[17] Despite this brazen military provocation and sea piracy, the Kremlin claimed it still continued to abide by the 2003 treaty but, following the construction of the bridge, Ukrainian vessels required permission before entering 'Russian' waters. Ukraine and the international community do not recognise Crimea's annexation and therefore do not accept the Azov Sea and Kerch Straits as 'Russian territorial waters' (Vorotnyuk 2018).

Fearing this act of piracy was a prelude to a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, President Poroshenko declared martial law which lasted until the end of December 2018. In May 2019, the Hamburg-based International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) ordered Russia to release and repatriate the 24 sailors and three naval vessels. The decision 'represents a

significant success for Ukraine and for international law' (Socor 2019). Nevertheless, Russia has continued to undertake an economic blockade of southern Donetsk *oblast*.

South Ossetia as a testing ground for Crimea

Russia's 2007 provoking of riots in Tallinn and the subsequent cyber-attack against Estonia, and its 2008 invasion of Georgia were testing grounds for Russian hybrid warfare against Ukraine six to seven years later. European Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow Andrew Wilson said: 'There could be an accidental or deliberate confrontation'[18] in Crimea leading to Russian intervention. Leon Aron, Director of Russian Studies at the Washington-based American Enterprise Institute (AEI), warned that Russian special forces could take control of Sevastopol in an overnight operation[19] with Ukrainian counter-operations thwarted by pro-Russian crowds. In 2008,

Chairman of Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine Mykola Malomuzh added the warning that Russian intelligence was seeking to undertake a 'special operation' in Crimea similar to what had been undertaken in Georgia.[20] Wilson, Aron and Malomuzh predicted Russia's actions in 2014; as did this author in a paper published four years before Russia's invasion (Kuzio 2010). Russia was never punished with sanctions for its invasion of Georgia; instead, President Barack Obama rewarded Putin with a reset of US-Russian relations. Putin most likely concluded that the West would also let him off the hook if he were to invade another neighbour.

Following Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia, Ukrainian Defence Minister Yuriy Yekhanurov announced plans to increase Ukraine's military presence in Crimea and deploy new units on Ukraine's border with Russia.[21] The Southern Operational Command (SOC) headquartered in Odesa included military bases in Crimea. Ukraine's 6th Army Corps in Crimea comprised naval marines, air force, anti-aircraft missile complexes, and one airborne, one air mobile, one armoured, one artillery and three mechanised brigades. These were under-funded and depleted during Yanukovych's presidency and proved to be ineffective in opposing Russia's invasion in 2014.

In summer 2008, Russia's encouragement to South Ossetian separatists to launch military provocations led to intervention by Georgian military forces followed by a Russian invasion to ostensibly protect 'Russian citizens.' President Yushchenko joined the Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian presidents in travelling to Tbilisi to stand alongside Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili to condemn Russia's invasion.

Russia's South Ossetia gambit has important ramifications for the Russian-Ukrainian war. Prior to 2008, Russian passports were illegally distributed in South Ossetia and Abkhazia giving Putin his alleged justification for the invasion of Georgia to defend Russian citizens (Kuzio 2008a, 2008b). Russia began illegally distributing passports in Crimea in 2014 and in the DNR and LNR in 2019[22] which would also give Putin his alleged justification to intervene in defence of Russian citizens in the Donbas where, unlike in Crimea, the Kremlin claims there are no Russian security forces. In spring 2021, Russia deployed a huge military force on Ukraine's border in the hope of provoking a similar justification to invade Ukraine - as it had engineered in South Ossetia six years earlier. Between 70,000 and 80,000 Russian forces are stationed on Ukraine's eastern border (Muzyka 2021).

Besides invading Georgia, Russia's second response was to recognise the 'independence' of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. No country other than Russia recognises their 'independence;' pro-Russian Belarus and Kazakhstan refused to follow suit. The only political forces in the CIS which recognised their 'independence' (aside from Russia) were the Party of Regions, the KPU and Crimean Russian nationalists in Ukraine. In September 2008 a resolution in support of recognising the 'independence' of the two Georgian territories failed to be adopted in the Ukrainian parliament. In the Crimean parliament, where the For Yanukovych! Bloc controlled a majority, a resolution was adopted in support of the 'independence' of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

This was the first occasion Ukrainian political forces had broken the country's consensus of supporting the post-Soviet territorial status quo. In doing so, Yanukovych and the Party of Regions opened up a Pandora's Box

of potential separatism; after all, if South Ossetia and Abkhazia could become ‘independent’ states, then why not Crimea?

Training Russian nationalists in Ukraine

Yushchenko was the first Ukrainian president to order the SBU to investigate Russian subversive and intelligence operations against Ukraine.[23] Yushchenko also ordered the SBU to upgrade its activities in Crimea and ‘investigate the efficiency of intelligence, counter-intelligence and operative measures in order to identify, prevent and halt intelligence, subversive and other illegal activities in Crimea by foreign secret services and non-governmental organisations’ (Kuzio 2009a, 2009b). The SBU was ordered to neutralise subversive activities ‘which harm Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, pose security threats and incite ethnic, racial and religious tensions’ (Kuzio 2009a, 2009b).

Russian active measures and other forms of what became popularly known after 2014 as hybrid warfare had been practised by Russia since 1991 and were not an invention of Putin or Russian Chief of the General Staff General Valery Gerasimov (see Kuzio and D’Anieri 2018, pp.25-69). The Russian World openly provided ‘grants’ to Russian nationalist political forces in Crimea, the Donbas, Odesa and Transcarpathia. Meanwhile, Russian intelligence services undertook covert operations against Ukraine.

Moscow House, located in central Sevastopol, was officially registered as a cultural and business centre but it was also home to the Institute for CIS States led by Zatulin in Moscow and in Crimea by Vladimir Soloviev. Soloviev was an example of the close ties between Russian intelligence, official Russian think tanks and political technologists. He was a ‘former’ Black Sea Fleet intelligence officer in a profession where of course there is no such thing as ‘former’ spies - as also seen in the case of Girkin.

Zatulin, Luzhkov and Zhirinovsky were banned from entering Ukraine because of their repeated support for Crimean separatism. Journalists from the *Rossiya* television channel were also barred from entering Ukraine for five years. Then director of the presidential National Institute of Strategic Studies Volodymyr Horbulin, and senior expert at the Kyiv-based Centre for Research into the Army, Conversion and Disarmament Valentyn Badrak,

advised the SBU to ensure ‘control over extremist and radically oriented Ukrainian groups in the south and east of the country.’[24] The SBU petitioned the Ministry of Justice to ban a number of separatist and extremist organisations ‘controlled from abroad’ which threatened Ukraine’s territorial integrity (Kuzio 2009a, 2009b). These included the Donetsk Republic political organisation that came to power in the DNR which was trained and supported by the Eurasian Youth Union (see below), Peoples Front ‘Sevastopol-Crimea-Russia,’ Odesa-based *Rodina* (Motherland) Party and *Proryv* (Breakthrough).

In August 2009, a crisis in Russian-Ukrainian relations erupted when Ukraine undertook the unprecedented step of expelling two Russian diplomats for undertaking activities ‘incompatible with their status’ (i.e., espionage). Russian General Consul in Odesa Aleksandr Grachev and senior adviser to Russian Ambassador Vladimir Lysenko were accused of providing financial and other resources to Russian nationalists in Crimea and Odesa (Kuzio 2012). In the following year, the SBU demanded that FSB officers within the Black Sea Fleet be withdrawn from Crimea.

Yanukovych lifted these travel bans on Russian politicians and political technologists imposed by his predecessor and Luzhkov was an honoured guest at Yanukovych’s 60th birthday party in July 2010. During President Medvedev’s visit to Ukraine in May 2010, Yanukovych agreed to permit the FSB to return to Crimea. During Yanukovych’s presidency, Russia infiltrated Ukrainian *siloviki* and took control of the SBU (see Kuzio 2012). Yanukovych’s treason had dire consequences in 2014 when Russian agents thwarted Ukrainian military and intelligence operations (Kuzio 2012; Kuzio 2020. pp.106-132). Russian intelligence and pro-Russian NGO’s and movements were given the keys to Crimea during Yanukovych’s presidency.

Putin - Crimea - Yanukovych: 2010-2014

When the Ukrainian-Russian inter-state treaty was signed in May 1997, President Yeltsin said: 'This puts an end to the so-called Sevastopol problem.'[25] He was being too optimistic as Russian politicians and state officials never reconciled themselves to Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea.[26]

In April 2010, Presidents Yanukovych and Medvedev negotiated the 'Kharkiv Accords' extending the Black Sea Fleet base for 25 years. The agreement was adopted with major infringements in the Ukrainian parliament and voted through by a slim majority of 236 votes made possible only by the bribing of 16 opposition deputies. In January 2021, Yanukovych was charged with 'high treason' for signing the 'Kharkiv Accords.'

There were seven important ramifications from the adoption of the 'Kharkiv Accords.' First, it allowed Russia to ignore earlier demands by Ukrainian presidents for negotiations on a phased withdrawal up to the end of the 20-year 'temporary' basing agreement in 2017. The 'Kharkiv Accords' made it even more unlikely that Russia would withdraw as the Kremlin had received a *de facto* long-term Russian naval base in Ukraine.

Yanukovych never had majority public support for an extension of Russia's Black Sea Fleet naval base in Sevastopol. A 2008 survey found only 24 percent support for an extension, 10 percent support for the Black Sea Fleet to withdraw as soon as possible and 47 percent support for its withdrawal in 2017.[27] A referendum would have rejected an extension of the Black Sea Fleet basing agreement in the 'Kharkiv Acccords.'

Russian irredentism towards Crimea and Sevastopol did not end with the signing of the 'Kharkiv Accords.' Luzhkov continued to press Russian claims saying sovereignty over the port 'remains unresolved. We are going to resolve it in favour of Russia's truth, its state positions, and the right of the (Russian) state to the Sevastopol naval base.'[28] Luzhkov ignored Yanukovych's concessions and Ukrainian protests and on 22 July 2010, during a speech on Russia's Navy Day, said Russia should *never* withdraw

from Crimea or Sevastopol. ‘Sevastopol is a Russian city, a naval-military base of Russia which ensures the geostrategic balance in southern Russia.’ If Russia were to lose the base, she would lose southern Russia, he asserted.[29]

Russia has always sought a ‘politically loyal, pro-Russian Ukraine;’ that is, Russia wants a ‘Kremlin vassal who would lead the country as a Little Russian.’[30] Yanukovych’s agreement to the ‘Kharkiv Accords’ whetted the appetite of Russian leaders that Ukraine could become ‘Belarus-2.’ The Party of Regions alliance with Russian nationalists in Crimea and Odesa encouraged the Kremlin to believe its myths and stereotypes about a country inhabited by ‘Little Russians.’ Donbas political and criminal elites (Kuzio 2014) were unable psychologically or intellectually to grasp Russia’s ‘refusal to recognise the existence of the Ukrainian nation,’ Horbulin and Badraw arned.[31]

Russia’s heavy-handed pressure and ‘gathering of Russian lands,’ especially after 2012, provoked a popular uprising (Kuzio 2017c). The Euromaidan Revolution was inevitably violent - in contrast to its peaceful Orange predecessor a decade before - because of the nature of the beast confronting it. There was simply no comparison between Kuchma and his moderate centrist political allies on the one hand, and Yanukovych and the criminal Donetsk clan and its political wing, the Party of Regions (Kuzio 2014), on the other.

‘Gathering of Russian lands’: 2012-

As this book has extensively documented, Russian nationalist stereotypes and myths of Ukraine and Ukrainians have no basis in reality but nevertheless have guided the Kremlin’s policies (see Kulyk 2018; Plokhy 2015, pp.347-355; O’Loughlin, Toal and Kolosov 2016, 2017; Kuzio 2017a, pp.211-289; Kulchytskyy and Mishchenko 2018). The lack of resonance for Russian stereotypes and myths meant Putin’s ‘gathering of Russian lands’ and the ‘New Russia’ project would be unsuccessful. Anti-(Euro)maidan protests transformed into armed insurgency in only two regions - Crimea and the Donbas - with the assistance of Russian military

intervention and intelligence assets, nationalist mercenaries and the Russian Orthodox Church.

Terminology about ‘New Russia’ and the Russian World were - and remain - nebulous and never understood by Ukrainians living in the southeastern region of their country. The first term had not been used for over a century and therefore this was not surprising. The Russian World only had popularity in Crimea and the Donbas, two regions where there were Russian nationalist separatists, 30-40 percent support for separatism and sections of the population who continued to define their identity as Soviet and a ‘Little Russian’ branch of the pan-Russian nation. Since 1991, the proportion of Ukrainians with a Soviet and Russian identity had been in decline, falling by half in the decade prior to the 2014 Ukraine crisis from 27 to 13 percent. But Soviet identity remained doggedly ensconced in the Donbas where it commanded the allegiance of a quarter of the population (Razumkov Centre 2016, pp.9, 36). 70 percent in the Donbas felt negatively about the collapse of the USSR, the highest in Ukraine, and only 12 percent positively (Democratic Initiatives Foundation 2015). The Russian World attracted support from lower educational and socio-economic groups in the Donbas and Crimea who were the losers in the transition to a market economy and had always been the least enthusiastic supporters of European integration (O’Loughlin, Toal, and Kolosov, 2016, 2017). These sections of the population associated the Russian World with something far bigger than the Russian Federation which they imagined as the former USSR and Eurasia.

The failed ‘New Russia’ project

Putin supported Yanukovych remaining in power by him winning a second term in 2015 so that he could take Ukraine into the Eurasian Economic Union. Instead, a second colour revolution thwarted Putin’s strategic goals, as it had in the Orange Revolution when Putin backed Yanukovych winning the presidency using election fraud. The Euromaidan ‘coup d’etat’ halted the unification and renaissance of ‘Holy Rus’ and the Russian World and them taking their place at the centre of the Eurasian Economic Union. Importantly, ‘Ukrainian fascists’ prevented Putin entering Russian history as the ‘gatherer of Russian lands.’

As discussed in the Preface, Putin (2014) would not challenge the inclusion of ‘Russian lands’ as long as Ukraine remained within Russia’s sphere of influence - but this was no longer the case after the Euromaidan ‘fascist coup d’etat.’ As Putin (2014) explained, Russia’s respect for Ukraine’s borders proceeded from continued ‘good relations with Ukraine’:

However, we expected Ukraine to remain our good neighbour, we hoped that Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Ukraine, especially in the southeast and Crimea, would live in a friendly, democratic and civilised state that would protect their rights in line with the norms of international law.

However, this is not how the situation developed. Time and time again attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation.

The new so-called authorities began by introducing a draft law to revise the language policy, which was a direct infringement on the rights of ethnic minorities...The draft law was set aside, but clearly reserved for the future. Nevertheless, we can all clearly see the intentions of these ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler’s accomplice during World War II.

Those who opposed the coup were immediately threatened with repression. Naturally, the first in line here was Crimea, Russian-speaking Crimea. In view of this, the residents of Crimea and Sevastopol turned to Russia for help in defending their rights and lives, in preventing the events that were unfolding and are still underway in Kyiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv and other Ukrainian cities.

Naturally, we could not leave this plea unheeded; we could not abandon Crimea and its residents in distress. This would have been betrayal on our part.

In 2014, Putin was very different to Putin a decade earlier after having gone through the two critical junctures discussed in the Preface that had supercharged Russian great power nationalism and stagnated Russian views of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Following the Euromaidan ‘fascist coup d’etat’ Putin (2014) believed Ukraine had forfeited its right to continue controlling

‘Russian lands’ which ‘the Bolsheviks’ had added from the ‘historical South of Russia to the Republic of Ukraine. This was done with no consideration for the ethnic make-up of the population, and today these areas form the southeast of Ukraine.’ Putin gave the green light to the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition that Russia no longer recognised Ukraine’s territorial integrity and they could dismember Ukraine and annex Crimea.

Six years earlier, Putin (2008) had opened up potential territorial claims against south-eastern Ukraine without using the loaded term ‘New Russia.’ Putin (2014), angry and with fewer scruples, revived the term ‘New Russia’ for south-eastern Ukraine - although the amateur historian was again confused as to what he was referring to. There had been two different ‘New Russia’ *gubernia* (provinces) in 1764-1802 and 1822-1874 but neither had included Kharkiv which was the centre of *Slobozhanshchyna* (Sloboda Ukraine) province. Putin wrongly included Kharkiv in the Tsarist *gubernia* of *NovoRossiia. Slobozhanshchyna* had historical ties to Ukrainian Cossacks and since the opening of its University in 1804 had become the intellectual capital of eastern Ukraine. In 2014, Ukrainians in northern Luhansk *oblast* had opposed pro-Russian separatists because their identity was that of Sloboda Ukraine, not the Donbas.[32]

Six years earlier and during the 2014 crisis, Putin (2008, 2014) was also confused about who settled ‘New Russia.’ Historically, ‘New Russia’ was never inhabited by a majority of Russians but by Ukrainians, specifically Ukrainian peasants who migrated there after its annexation by the Russian Empire (Magocsi 1996, 2010). By the 1897 Tsarist census, Ukrainian peasants had become the majority of the population in all of the regions of ‘New Russia.’

Putin (2008) described these settlers as ‘Russians’ which meant he referred to the 1897 Tsarist census that had denied the existence of Ukrainians by equating ‘Russians’ with eastern Slavs (i.e., a pan-Russian nation). The vast ‘New Russia’ territory was also populated by Jews, Romanians, and Tatars; ethnic Russians arrived much later during Soviet industrialisation (Laruelle 2016).

Using modern census results - and 21st, not 19th century definitions of ‘Russians’ - shows they only constituted a majority in Crimea but in no

other region in Ukraine. Ukraine's 2001 census recorded an overall average of 74.37 percent of Ukrainians and 14.1 percent Russians in the four southeastern *oblasts* of Odesa (62.8 percent Ukrainians; 20.7 percent Russians), Mykolayiv (81.9 percent; 14.1 percent), Kherson (82 percent; 14.1 percent) and Zaporizhzhya (70.8 percent; 24.7 percent) (Ukrainian Census 2001).

Public opinion in south-eastern Ukraine found 'New Russia' to be fluid, vague and an empty of substance term. Adhering to a 'New Russia' identity required the inhabitants of south-eastern Ukraine to replace their identity with one based on the Russian language, the Russian Orthodox Church and membership of a pan-Russian nation and the Russian World.

Only a minority of south-eastern Ukrainians supported the Russian World. Half believed it to be a 'historical myth' while a sizeable number viewed it as a concept which had been conjured up by Russian political technologists. The concept failed as a geopolitical brand to explain the contrasting differences between the land and people of Ukraine and the land and people of 'New Russia' (Suslov 2017, p.218). Ukrainian and Russian World identities were mutually contradictory because the former recognised a separate Ukrainian nation while the latter did not and subscribed to Ukrainians as a branch of the pan-Russian nation (O'Loughlin, Toal, and Kolosov 2016, 2017). Ukrainian and Russian World identities would have been compatible only if Ukrainians began thinking of themselves as 'Little Russians' - as a minority did who took power in the DNR and LNR.

Dugin's integration of the Russian World with Putin's Eurasian Economic Union narrowed the number of Ukrainian supporters even further. Support for Eurasian integration collapsed from 30-40 percent prior to 2014 to less than 10 percent since, in response to Russian military aggression. Meanwhile, Ukrainian backing for NATO and EU membership dramatically increased. Support for Ukraine joining the CIS Customs Union/Eurasian Economic Union collapsed from 43 percent in 2012 to 20 percent in 2020 (International Republican Institute and Rating Sociological Group 2021).

In 2014, Moscow's goal was to provoke a 'civil war' in Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine which would be portrayed as popular opposition to Euro-maidan Revolutionary 'putschists.' Opponents of the 'putschists' would call

for Russian protection from ‘Ukrainian fascists’ (Kuzio 2017a, pp.211-250). ‘Uprisings’ would be assisted through the use of Russian intelligence assets, Russian GRU *spetsnaz* (the so-called ‘Little Green Men’ who invaded Crimea), Russian neo-Nazi, nationalist and Cossack mercenaries, and Russian ‘political tourists’ bussed into Ukraine and pretending to be locals.

Russia could also rely upon Ukrainians in the military and intelligence services who had been recruited by Russian intelligence (Kuzio 2012), activists from the Party of Regions, the KPU, the Progressive Socialist Party, the Odesa-based *Rodina* Party, the Kharkiv-based *Oplot* (Stronghold) vigilante group and an array of Crimean Russian nationalists.

Local pro-Russian activists were instructed to take control of official buildings, pressure local politicians to transfer their loyalty to Russia, stage manage protest rallies, and eventually issue appeals for Russia to intervene. During the 2014 crisis, the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition would provide logistical support for a general strike, the formation of armed self-defence units, the taking of hostages from the Ukrainian authorities, the dismantling of the Russian-Ukrainian border, the elimination of border guards and customs officers and the mobilisation of an information warfare campaign against Ukraine (Laruelle 2016).

Leaked tapes of Russian presidential adviser Glazyev, who worked directly under President Putin’s senior adviser Surkov, provide an insight into the Kremlin’s plans in 2014 (Shandra and Seely 2019; Standish 2016). On these tapes Glazyev is heard saying ‘I have a direct order from the (Kremlin) leader to mobilise the masses in Ukraine wherever we can.’ Glazyev is heard pleading that ‘President Putin has signed the order (for military intervention in Ukraine). The operation has begun.’[33] (see Lutsenko 2016).

Leaked tapes by Glazyev prove beyond any doubt the artificiality of the ‘New Russia’ project. Russia intervened in Ukraine immediately after the Euromaidan Revolution took power and therefore, ‘denying an active Russian role was never plausible’ (Freedman 2019, p.97). Meanwhile modest proRussian protests ‘did not support claims that Russia must rescue people who faced danger and were desperate for assistance’ (Freedman 2019, p.97). Only Russia’s intervention transformed ‘unarmed anti-

government protests' into an armed rebellion by fanning 'the flames of pre-existing ethnic, cultural and political tensions in the region' (Umland 2016).

In March-April 2014, Russian *spetsnaz,* nationalist and neo-Nazi mercenaries, Cossacks and pro-Kadyrov Chechens covertly intervened in Ukraine (Dzutsev 2015) while[34] in July-August 2014 and January-February 2015, Russian regular armed forces overtly invaded Ukraine. Russia had 2,000 special forces ready in Transnistria to intervene in Odesa,[35] but this plan collapsed when support for pro-Russian forces plummeted even further after a fire on 2 May 2014 led to the deaths of 46 pro-Russian and six proUkrainian activists. Russia had failed in its efforts to establish the Kharkiv and Odesa Peoples Republics, the two crown jewels of 'New Russia.'

The key to the success of the 'New Russia' project lay in portraying local 'uprisings' as representing the popular will of Russian speaking Ukrainians seeking protection from 'fascist' Kyiv. If there were no large pro-Russian rallies and protests against the Ukrainian authorities, there would be no fig leaf for the intervention of Russian forces. In Zaporizhzhya, a paltry 1,500 pro-Russian protestors gathered who were pelted with eggs and flour by a larger number of Ukrainian patriots. Glazyev was clearly frustrated at the low turnout in his hometown and asked, 'Why is Zaporizhzhya silent?' complaining 'Where are they? Where are the Cossacks? I have an order to bring everyone out into the streets to demand Russia's help.' (Lutsenko 2016).[36] In 2014, 'There was no evidence that those occupied buildings were actively backed by substantial sections of the local population' (Freedman 2019, p.98). Indeed, the takeover of official buildings was supported by only 24 percent, 18 percent and 10 percent, respectively, in Luhansk, Donetsk, and Kharkiv (Giuliano 2018).

Russian nationalists and Ukrainophobia in the Donbas

Malyarenko and Wolff (2019, p.32) ignore pro-Russian extremist groups such as the Donetsk Republic political force when they write 'the establishment of an independent Donbas "state" had never been the goal of any identitybuilding project in Donbas.' Drawing on earlier Russian nationalist and panSlavic groups in the Donbas going back as far as 1991,

the Donetsk Republic political force was created in reaction to the Orange Revolution. It was supported by high-ranking patrons in the Party of Regions, the KPU and the Progressive Socialist Party 'who condoned their anti-Ukrainian and separatist activities' (Shekhovtsov 2016).

Throughout the decade prior to the 2014 crisis the Donetsk Republic political force was financed, trained and supervised by the Russian presidential administration, Russian intelligence, and Russian great power nationalist groups. Its ideological indoctrination and paramilitary training were supervised by Surkov and Glazyev and provided by Dugin's Eurasian Youth Union and the International Eurasian Movement (Shekhovtsov 2016). Dugin, Donetsk Republic and the most extreme of Crimean nationalist separatists shared the same goal of dismembering Ukraine.

Donetsk Republic was trained in Russian summer camps and encouraged to pursue a range of political objectives, such as collecting signatures for a referendum on the 'independence' of Donetsk *oblast.* Donetsk Republic promoted a programme of transforming Ukraine's south-eastern regions into a quasi 'independent' federal Republic. The Ukrainian authorities banned Donetsk Republic in 2007 after it called for the referendum. Leaders of Donetsk Republic were charged with infringing three articles of the Ukrainian criminal code: 109 'calling for the forcible overthrow of the government;' 110 'infringing Ukraine's territorial integrity;' and 161 'violating the equality of citizens based on race, nationality and religion.'

Russia continued to provide the now underground Donetsk Republic with all manner of logistical support. In 2012 the Eurasian Youth Union assisted them in opening an 'embassy' in Moscow. 'Several newspapers and magazines (of the Donetsk Republic) appeared out of nowhere, but everyone knew they were funded by Moscow. At around the same time, new NGOs of unclear origin set up operations' (Peshkov 2016).

Malyarenko and Wolff (2019, p.35) dismiss 'persistent separatist tendencies' in eastern Ukraine on the eve of the 2014 crisis. Malyarenko and Wolff (2019) ignore a mountain of evidence to the contrary about 'widespread antiUkrainian sentiment' but were right about low support for separatism (see Giuliano 2018). Malyarenko and Wolff (2019) also ignored Donetsk Republic who denied the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians (see

Shekhovtsov 2016), and united ‘internationalist,’ pro-Russian and Slavophile groups active in the Donbas (see Kuzio 2017a, pp.193-201).

The Donetsk Republic upholds four chauvinistic views of Ukraine and Ukrainians which are the same as those found in Russia’s ‘red-white-brown’ coalition:

1 Ukraine is an ‘artificial’ entity.

2 A Ukrainian nation does not exist. The division of a single *Russkii* (‘Russian’) people into Ukrainians and Russians was artificial. Ukrainians are one of three branches of the pan-Russian nation. Leaders of Donetsk Republic believe that ‘The primordial people of Rus are the *Russkii* people as an indivisible foundation of the Great Russian Race’ (Shekhovtsov 2016). That is, Ukrainians are ‘Little Russians.’

3 The ‘Indigenous *Russkii* population’ in south-eastern Ukraine is being subjected to ‘forced Ukrainianisation’ and ‘genocide.’

4 Donetsk and south-eastern Ukraine comprise ‘New Russia’ which is an organic part of the Russian World. Donetsk, Luhansk, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Kharkiv and Kherson should create an ‘independent’ federal republic.

Ukrainophobia in Crimea and the Donbas had been present for decades before the 2014 crisis, increased during and after the Euromaidan Revolution and has become official policy in the DNR and the LNR. In spring 2014, it was ‘hunting season’ for Ukrainian patriots in the Donbas and Crimea (Moyseyeva 2021).[37] Professing a Ukrainian identity in the Donbas in spring 2014 and since in the DNR and the LNR was ‘considered dangerous,’ the human rights think tank Freedom House reported.[38] Speaking Ukrainian would lead to accusations and suspicions you were a ‘Ukrainian agent.’[39] Speaking Ukrainian ‘can be dangerous, sparking animosity from locals or suspicions of subversiveness from gun-toting rebels.’[40] DNR leader Vyacheslav Ponomaryov instructed locals to inform the *Militsiya* (Militia) of suspicious people, ‘especially those who spoke Ukrainian.’[41] Supporting the Euromaidan Revolution, standing up as a

patriot in defence of Ukraine's territorial integrity, waving the Ukrainian flag, wearing a blue and yellow ribbon and protesting with likeminded Ukrainian patriots was sufficient to ensure you would be physically attacked and accused of 'nationalism' and 'fascism' (Those Who Survived Hell 2015). Violent vigilantes who attacked peaceful pro-Ukrainian protests in spring 2014 burnt Ukrainian flags.

Ukrainian patriots who attended protests during the Euromaidan Revolution were illegally confined and tortured by Militia officers sympathetic to pro-Russian extremists. Protestors were beaten and, in some cases, murdered by pro-Russian extremists and vigilantes (Coynash 2014). Ukrainian patriots opposed to the break-up of their country were labelled as 'enemies,' 'fascists' and *'Banderovets'* (followers of nationalist leader Bandera). Donetsk social worker Viktor Alanov reported that 'All those who participated in the Euromaidan protests (both in Kyiv and Donetsk) were retroactively declared enemies and "sentenced to death".'[42]

Tanya, a Ukrainian teacher working in a school in the DNR complained about edicts forcing them to use Russian nationalist books: 'We are an educational institution, and we are allowing all kinds of fascists into our midst.'[43] Ukrainophobia in children's magazines published by the LNR attacked Ukrainian 'fascists' and 'evil Americans' (Balmforth 2016).[44] Children in the DNR are fed Ukrainophobia in 'military patriotic' camps where they are taught 'fascist' Kyiv is waging a war against them (Coynash 2020).

Quotations on billboards and posters by Zakharchenko 'read like posters of Lenin in Soviet times.' Television rhetoric and billboard propaganda ranted against 'fascists' who 'always wanted to kill us,' 'Kyiv wants to drag us into the EU and destroy our Orthodox Church' while 'The US wants to take our shale gas and disgrace our holy places' (Pomerantsev 2016).

'Russia completely controls the ideological and information space of the occupied territories' and provide the means and discourse for DNR and LNR media to fan Ukrainophobic content and disinformation (Razumkov Centre 2019; Kuzio 2020, pp.82-105). Anti-extremism legislation and other methods modelled on Russian legislation and policies have led to repression

of Ukrainian Orthodox, Greek-Catholic and Protestant Churches, severe curtailment of Ukrainian language instruction in schools, banning of Ukrainian books, and their removal from libraries and destruction. Memorials to the *Holodomor,* Political Repression in the Soviet Union and dissidents Stus and Vyacheslav Chornovil have been pulled down (Coynash 2016).[45]

All Ukrainian political parties, including the pro-Russian Opposition Bloc and Opposition Platform - For Life, two successors to the Party of Regions, are not permitted to operate in the DNR and the LNR. Permitting a small number of political parties to be registered in the DNR and the LNR has nothing to do with political pluralism and everything to do with copying Russia's authoritarian political system where a dominant United Russia Party is surrounded by loyal 'opposition' parties: LDPR, Motherland Party and Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth. In the DNR the only legal political forces are Donetsk Republic, *Svobodnyj Donbas* (Free Donbas) and the Communist Party. Meanwhile in Luhansk the registered political forces are *Mir Luganshchine* (Peace for Luhansk), Luhansk Economic Union and the Communist Party (Eastern Human Rights Group 2020).

Russian proxies: DNR and LNR

The DNR and the LNR were created in 2014 by leaders of the 'red-white-brown' coalition and local supporters of these ideologies in the Donbas, such as Donetsk Republic. The 'red-white-brown' coalition influenced 'state building,' nationality and educational policies and memory politics in the DNR and the LNR. Donetsk Republic flew Russian, Soviet, Tsarist and DNR (from the short-lived 1918 Donetsk-Kryvyy Rih Bolshevik Republic) flags. The influence of Russia's 'red-white-brown' coalition can be ascertained from the following:

1 Red: The 'national idea' behind the DNR is the 1918 Donetsk-Kryvyy Rih Bolshevik Republic which Lenin integrated with the Ukrainian SSR. Soviet nostalgia permeates the DNR and LNR.

2 *White:* 'Liberating' the Donbas was one stage in the 'gathering of Russian lands,' Sergei Baryshnikov said, believing it would lead to the recreation of the Russian Empire which he believes is 'our historical mis-sion.'[46] Russian

Cossacks espousing ‘White’ nostalgia play a leading role in the LNR. Downplaying ties to Ukraine, the history of the Donbas is taught as part of the ‘History of Russia’ with its foundations in the ‘ancient Russian state’ of ‘Kievan Russia’ (Coynash 2021). DNR Minister of Education Igor V. Kostenok outlined the goal of history teaching as, ‘creating a cult, a cult for the Slavonic world, for the Russian World.’[47] The DNR linked itself to ‘the ancient Russian state’ to provide legitimacy to the claim the Donbas had always been ‘Russian’ (Abibok 2018; Coynash 2021). The DNR and the LNR uphold the Tsarist and White Russian emigre belief in the existence of a pan-Russian nation and do not therefore recognise Ukraine or Ukrainians. Ukraine is an ‘artificial’ creation, DNR Deputy Defence Minister Eduard Basurin said.[48]

3 *Brown*: Russian neo-Nazis, such as the RNE, were at the forefront of the establishment of the DNR in spring 2014. Konstantin Eggert, *Deutsche Welle’s* (DW) correspondent on Russia, said Prilepin, leader of the Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth Party which is very active in the DNR is ‘the closest Russia has to a public neo-Nazi.’[49] Prilepin described ‘New Russia’ as ‘Russian’ because the people ‘speak Russian,’ ‘think Russian’ and do not want to live under western Ukrainian values. Prilepin claimed that the Donbas and ‘New Russia’ were detached from ‘Russia’ in 1991 when the USSR disintegrated, ignoring the fact these regions had been part of the Ukrainian SSR for seven decades. As is typical of all Russian great power nationalists, Prilepin conflated ‘Russia’ and the USSR (Eastern Human Rights Group 2021).

Indoctrinated, financed and trained by Russia during the previous decade the Donetsk Republic was installed into power by Russian hard power. As with their counterparts in Russia stretching back to the 1991 putsch and 1993 coup d’etat, the DNR and the LNR draw upon Russian great power nationalism, Soviet internationalism, Russian Orthodox fundamentalism, and neo-Nazism. ‘Anti-nationalism’ and ‘anti-fascism’ (i.e., everything associated with Ukraine) was a bedrock of the Donetsk Republic political force and has subsequently become so for the DNR and LNR (Coynash 2013).

The Donetsk Republic political force, the DNR and the LNR believe that the Donbas is a 'Russian' land. Russian nationalists who travelled to the Donbas came, to 'protect the Russian people' who were a 'brotherly people' in 'danger of reprisals.'[50] Asked about a Russian invasion of eastern Ukraine, a Russian nationalist mercenary replied: 'What invasion? This is Russian territory. We are liberating it.'[51] The Donbas is not a 'foreign country' as 'This is our land' and he had come to 'fight against the values of the western world.'[52] Another Russian mercenary, when asked why he had fought for the DNR replied: 'I am a patriot of Russia, and Slavs live there. The same Russians as me,'[53] confusingly mixing up 'Slavs' and 'Russians' as one and the same. Russian nationalists travelling to Ukraine to fight against Kyiv believed President Putin's discourse of the 'God-given indivisibility of the Eastern Slavic world' (Apryshchenko 2020, p.144); in other words, the panRussian nation. The Donbas was 'always' Russian, and they were therefore not separatists because in the words of an LNR fighter, they merely wished to 'return home to Russia.'[54] In their eyes the real separatists were Ukrainians who wished to live apart from the Russian World. Russian nationalists in the Donbas and mercenaries who travelled from Russia believe Ukrainians with a national consciousness are the real 'separatists' because they are dividing the 'Russian people' by separating themselves from Russia. Russian nationalists stood for the unity of the eastern Slavs while nationally conscious Ukrainians stood for separatism from the Russian World at the behest of their Western paymasters.

The DNR and the LNR have copied Russia's authoritarian political system, political repression, Ukrainophobia, history teaching, ideological foundations and anti-Western xenophobia. This is most clearly evident in six historical myths and approaches to history (see Kuzio 2017b; Tolko Piat Ballov! 2019): [1] the Russian World provides a sense of belonging to a larger historical, political and cultural community which could be the USSR or 'prerevolutionary Russia.'

2 *Soviet Myth of Brotherhood*: School children are taught 'Fatherland History' which highlights close ties between the Donbas and Russia while downplaying links between Ukraine and the Donbas. The ideology of the Soviet state was good, Zakharchenko believed, because children were raised on values which included 'family, loyalty, brotherhood, and love for

the motherland.'[57] DNR Minister of Education Kostenok believes in the need to inculcate 'an idea about socialism, about creating a cult, a cult of the Slavic world, for the Russian World.'[58] A programme of 'patriotic education' for children and young people in the DNR outlined how 'Russian World ideology' should 'become the main objective of the republic's state ideology' (Coynash 2021).

3 *Cult of Stalin:* The cult of Stalin in the DNR and the LNR is a replica of that which has been in full swing during Putin's presidency and denies the *Holodomor* was a genocide against Ukraine (Kuzio 2017b). In both Russia and the DNR and LNR, the 1930s are praised as a time of modernisation, industrialisation, growth of literacy and expansion of science and technology. Use of the term *Holodomor* and claims it was a genocide are banned in Crimea, the DNR and the LNR (Marochko 2015).

Three large portraits of Stalin hung in the centre of Donetsk. A 22-year-old local resident said, 'I think the portraits of Stalin are a good thing. It's our history and a lot of people have forgotten he even existed.' Stalin's portraits are fashionable in the offices of DNR and LNR officials. DNR Deputy Minister of Defence Eduard Basurin proudly wears a Stalin badge on his uniform.[59] Portraits of Stalin hang in cars driven by Russian mercenaries, one of who told the BBC: 'I have adored him as a man since my childhood. Because he was a real man'[60] (Tymoshenko 2020).

Donetsk uses Stalino, the name of the city from 1924-1961, and Luhansk uses Voroshilovgrad (the name of the city between 1935 and1958, and 1970 and 1990), during the 9 May holiday celebrating Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War. DNR and LNR proxy forces have been renamed after those which existed in the Soviet Union. In the LNR the *Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR* (Ministry of State Security - MGR) is named after the MGR that existed in Stalin's Soviet Union from 1946-1953. The justice system has revived the Soviet system's use of the death penalty for looting and other crimes.

4 *Great Patriotic War*: A quasi-religious cult of the Great Patriotic War is central to history teaching in the DNR and the LNR - as it is in Russia (Hurska 2019). The Donbas fought the Nazis in the Great Patriotic War and

since 2014 are fighting ‘Ukrainian fascists’ imposing their western Ukrainian values on ‘Russian’ Ukraine.

5 *Russification:* The DNR and the LNR have returned to Soviet era Russification by introducing language policies which has dramatically reduced the use of the Ukrainian language in official institutions and education. Russian is the ‘state language’ in the DNR and the LNR. The Donbas is being alienated from Ukraine through ‘political, ideological and socio-cultural Russification’ and the raising of ‘local youth in a spirit of estrangement and hostility towards Ukraine’ (Razumkov Centre 2019, p.10).[61] As in the USSR, Ukrainian Orthodox, Greek-Catholic and Protestant Churches are repressed, and the Russian Orthodox Church is the state Church.

6 *Anti-Western Xenophobia*: Allegiance to the Russian World and Eurasian integration correlates with anti-Western xenophobia and an intense dislike of Europe. The DNR Constitution adopted in May 2014 declares: ‘European values are alien to us; we should support our Russian traditions.’[62] Anti-western xenophobia is as prevalent in the DNR and the LNR as it is in Russia. Since 1991 the West has exported Coca-Cola, Mickey Mouse, blue jeans, and Playboy to the former Soviet Union, as well as a ‘democracy that implies that the family could have two dads or two moms.’[63] The DNR and the LNR have imported Russian homophobic attacks on *Gayropa* (Foxall 2017).

[1]

Soviet ‘Golden Era’: Soviet history is glorified as advancement, modernisation and industrialisation. ‘Soviet identity put down deep roots in the Donbas because nothing much came before it,’ Wilson (2016, p.636) writes. The cult of Alexei Stakhanov is in full swing. The USSR is recreated through Soviet pioneer groups and Soviet sports festivals. Former SBU officer and DNR military commander Serhiy Zdrilyuk believes that ‘The Soviet Union was the most righteous country. It was built on communism. Then America told us we didn’t have enough sex, drugs and rock-and-roll. And we’ve had all that up to here.’[55] Former Prime Minister Zakharchenko believed the DNR should be built on Soviet identity: ‘We

thought, still think and will think of ourselves as part of the Soviet Union, of Russia,'[56] equating the two as one and the same. DNR and LNR leaders agree with the majority of Russians who see the Russian ‘imagined community' as the Tsarist Empire, Soviet Union and Eurasia - not the Russian Federation (Hutchings and Tolz 2015, pp.24, 26, 29). Matveeva (2017, p.37) writes that membership of

Conclusions

The 2014 crisis came about as a consequence of Russian myths and stereotypes about Russia, Ukraine, the Russian World and Eurasia which had nothing to do with reality but nevertheless, guided official policies. Russia invaded and annexed Crimea but failed to engineer mass protests in south-eastern Ukraine showing 'New Russia' to be nothing more than a myth. The DNR and the LNR will remain in limbo between Russia and Ukraine for years to come with neither country wanting to pay the price of their integration. At the same time, the distribution of Russian passports in the DNR and the LNR will bring them closer to Russia and make reintegration with Ukraine difficult.

In 2014, Russian nationalist separatists in south-eastern Ukraine and the 'red-white-brown' coalition believed Putin would follow the annexation of Crimea with the annexation of 'New Russia.' Putin's goal was more ambitious; he wanted to capture all of Ukraine, not just one of its regions. The Kremlin sought the transformation of Ukraine into a loose federation and use 'New Russia' as a Russian 'Trojan Horse' inside the country. The failure of the 'New Russia' project meant only the DNR and LNR were successfully captured by Russian nationalists and therefore Russian policy changed to pressuring Kyiv into reintegrating these two enclaves on the Kremlin's terms. Russian demands focused on changing Ukraine's Constitution to grant the DNR and the LNR 'special status,' changing Ukraine's territorial structure into a federalised republic and transforming DNR and LNR armed forces into a local (Russian-controlled) security force.

Another Russian demand during peace negotiations is for Ukraine to become a neutral state and to no longer seek membership of NATO and the EU. Prior to 2014, Ukraine's 'neutrality' combined a permanent naval base in Sevastopol with non-bloc status and yet by its very definition, neutral countries do not host foreign military bases. Russia's so-called 'neutrality' also demanded that Ukraine drop EU membership in favour of membership of the Eurasian Economic Union, which Putin had pressured Yanukovych to switch to in 2012-2013. Ukraine's non-bloc status, which was in force from

July 2010 to December 2014, showed itself to be vacuous when it failed to prevent Russia's invasion and military aggression.

Russia had pursued a similar strategy in 2003 in Moldova in the plan outlined by then First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Kozak who had proposed a solution to the Transnistria separatist region through Moldova's federalisation. The Transnistria would act in the same manner as a 'Trojan Horse' as the DNR and the LNR in Ukraine. Only deep-seated stereotypes and myths about Ukraine could possibly explain why the Kremlin believes Ukrainians would sign up to a similar proposal which had been earlier rejected by Moldova's Communist leadership. The reason a peace deal has eluded Poroshenko and Zelenskyy is because, as this book has analysed in Chapter 7, no Ukrainian president could ever agree to the Kremlin's demands for capitulation in the Donbas and transformation of Ukraine into a 'Belarus-2' while the overwhelming majority of Ukrainians do not see themselves as 'Little Russians.'

Notes

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23 *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 5 July 2009.

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25 *Reuters*, 31 May 1997.

26 Interviews with Luzhkov in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 22 January 1997; *Trud*, 13 February 1997; *Obshchaia Gazeta*, 19-25 February 1998; and *Krymskaia Pravda*, 3 August 1999.

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29 *Hazeta po-Ukrayinski*, 22 July 2010.

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9 Conclusions

Those sitting in Kyiv [are] servants of Western states, who not only keep Russian people living in the country in slavery but also use them as cannon fodder for the war with Russia.

Ukraine is a territory occupied by the global, centuries-old adversary of Russia. In different eras, this enemy was personified by England, the Kaiser, or Nazi Germany, and now the United States. Today Ukraine is ruled by Western puppet Gauleiters, but they are not independent rulers, but only servants under Western masters.

Leader of the Union of Donbas Volunteers Aleksandr Borodai[1]

[Russian strategy] reflected an inability to take the idea of an independent state seriously and a tendency to assume that because its political institutions shared roots with those of Russia, they were essentially the same had it not been for the corrupting influence of Western ideas.

Lawrence Freedman (2019, pp.84-85)

This book has analysed how Russian nationalist stereotypes and myths of Ukraine and Ukrainians have nothing in common with reality, are widespread and deeply ingrained among Russian leaders and drive the Russian-Ukrainian war. Russian security policy towards Ukraine, its annexation of Crimea and ongoing military aggression are being driven in the 21st century by late 19th century Tsarist and Russian emigre historical myths. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 analyse how Russian Tsars, White Russian emigres and contemporary Russian leaders are on the same page about Ukraine and Ukrainians.

Russian political and religious leaders and many Russian think tank experts and scholars believe Ukraine should implement eastern Slavic identity policies and become a ‘Belarus-2.’ Echoing Putin and other Russian leaders, Zhirinovsky said, ‘The whole of Ukraine should become part of Russia through a referendum, since it is an artificial entity created by Lenin,

Stalin and Khrushchev. All the present-day lands of Ukraine were historically part of Russia, and the “partition” of the USSR in 1991 was “illegal”.’[2] By definition, anything else is anti-Russian, nationalistic and instigated by the West to divide the ‘Russian’ people. What is inconceivable, after seven decades of living together in the Ukrainian SSR and three decades as an independent state, is that Ukrainians would agree with Russian political and religious leaders that their country is ‘artificial’ and they are Little Russian members of a pan-Russian nation. There is no precedent in world history for a country putting up its hands and saying ‘Ok! You were right and we were wrong. Our country is a fiction and we’re the same as you after all. Please take us back!’

This book has shown how in the course of the 20th century Russian liberalism was influential for less than a decade in total: only for a few years after the fall of Tsarism in 1917 and a bit longer in the late Gorbachev and early Yeltsin eras from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Even during these two brief periods there was a deeply felt angst and opposition among Russian politicians, including liberals, to come to terms with a Ukraine being separate from Russia. As Chapter 3 shows, imperialism, great power nationalism, and chauvinism dominated Russian emigres, and official and dissident Russian nationalism in the Soviet Union. A bold and brave Russian democratic dissident community did exist which sympathised with, and in some cases supported, the demands of Ukrainian and other non-Russian opposition movements, but it was small and did not have deep roots in Russian society.

There were no Russian national democrats in the Soviet Union (perhaps with one exception - Bukovsky). In contrast, Ukrainian national democratic dissidents, who combined demands for national and human rights, were the most influential group among Ukrainian dissidents and the major driving force in the late 1980s for republican sovereignty and state independence. Russian national democracy remains a work in uncertain progress over half a century after it emerged as a powerful force in Ukraine. The reason for this is that national democracy is an oxymoron in Russian political life because the two main issues which preoccupied Ukrainian national democrats are unimportant for Russians. The first is defending language and culture from denationalisation, a threat Russians have never had to face.

The second is seeking an independent state which Russians have never been interested in supporting. During periods of Soviet liberalisation, Ukrainian national democrats and national communists were allied against the Soviet centre. The Russian SFSR could not make demands against itself, the Soviet centre, and therefore Russia had national Bolsheviks while Ukraine had national communists.

An important reason for the weakness of liberalism and national democracy in Russia is the Russian 'imagined community' has never dovetailed with the Russian SFSR or Russian Federation. The USSR, the CIS, the Russian Union, the Russian World and Eurasia are the Russian 'imagined communities.' Russians never sought an independent nation-state in 1917 or in 1991 and did not declare independence from the USSR or therefore hold an independence referendum. In December 1991, Yeltsin sought to transform the USSR into a Union of Sovereign States; Kravchuk wanted to abolish the USSR. As Chapters 2, 6, 7 and 8 show, in the 1990s a post-imperial Russian civic identity was the least popular of five Russian identities. Russia's four other identities, which can be found in the 'red-white-brown' coalition and whose discourse and ideas are promoted by Russian leaders, view the Ukrainian state as an 'artificial' anti-Russian construct historically promoted by foreign intrigue or mistakenly created by Lenin. A separate Ukrainian state outside the Russian World is considered to be anti-Russian by default.

Chapter 2 shows how Russia and Ukraine took different paths from 1991 because they had very different understandings of their histories (Russia as part of a common eastern Slavic community, Ukraine as an independent state); contrasting experiences in the USSR (Russia and the USSR as one and the same, Ukraine seeking greater republican rights and subjected to genocide and political repression); and different approaches to post-Soviet nation and state building (Russia top down, Ukraine bottom up). Over the last three decades, a Russia seeking to build unions of different descriptions has repeatedly clashed with a Ukraine guarding its territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence.

Russian territorial claims towards Crimea and Sevastopol began in the first months of Russian independence and continued throughout the 1990s and

2000s, culminating in invasion and annexation in 2014. The ‘Kharkiv Accords’ signed by Presidents Yanukovych and Medvedev did not halt Mayor Luzhkov’s irredentism. Putin’s (2014) speech welcoming Crimea into the Russian Federation praised ‘citizens and many public figures’ who ‘came back to this issue, saying that Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol is a Russian city.’

A pro-Western foreign policy lasted barely a few years in independent Russia. The suppression of the 1993 coup d’etat, success of nationalists, communists and other extreme political forces in the 1993 and 1995 parliamentary elections, and Yeltsin’s creation of the Russian-Belarusian Union in the 1996 presidential elections transitioned Russia away from Gorbachev’s concept of the USSR as part of a ‘Common European Home’ that he unveiled in 1989 to the ‘Primakov Doctrine’ from 1996 of understanding Russia as being at the centre of a Eurasia where it exerted hegemonic control. Since 1994-1996, that is for the majority of its post-Soviet existence, Russian foreign policy has been nationalistic and xenophobically anti-Western. Russia defines itself as a great power through its hegemony over Eurasia and its domination of this regions second most important country - Ukraine.

As Chapter 4 shows, the Yeltsin era is therefore not uniform and certainly not as democratic or liberal as is often described by western scholars. A proWestern foreign policy and post-imperial policy towards Ukraine and Eurasia was implemented for far fewer years than an assertive, nationalistic and hegemonic approach. Although the ‘red-brown’ coalition’s 1991 and 1993 coups d’etat were defeated these political forces moved from the margins to the centre of power during Putin’s presidency where they received state support in 2014 for the annexation of Crimea and the ‘New Russia’ project. The ‘red-brown’ coalition of Yeltsin’s 1990s broadened to the ‘red-white-brown’ coalition of Putin’s presidency. Primakov’s leadership of Russian foreign policy prepared the ground for Putin’s rise to power and the institutionalisation of Russian great power nationalism and Eurasianism towards Ukraine, Eurasia and the West. Former KGB officers Primakov and Putin brought to power the former Soviet *siloviki* who transformed Russia into a militocracy.

Domination of Ukraine is not only important for Russia to assert itself as a great power. Russian stereotypes and myths portray Ukraine as ‘Russian’ and Ukrainians as a branch of the pan-Russian nation. ‘Russian’ history began in Kyiv and the ‘first Russian state’ was ‘Kievan Russia.’ Russians - but no longer Ukrainians - continue to believe in the Soviet historical myths of their common origins, their desire to always live together and the treacherous nature of Ukrainians and Westerners who have sought to divide the ‘Russian people.’ Since 1991 Ukrainians have begun integrating into the 21st century post-modern EU while Russians have stagnated in the imperialism, intrigue and conspiracies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As Chapter 2 shows, Ukrainian historians such as Hrushevsky developed a separate history to Russians over a century ago - although Russians have seemingly never studied it - and this framework has been dominant in Ukraine for three decades. Ukrainians view Kyiv Rus as exclusively part of their history. Refuting Russian claims to Kyiv Rus, Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council Oleksiy Danilov (2021) said ‘This is ours. Why should we give it to somebody else?...You have a large territory there. Get away from ours!’ Ukrainian history is critically disposed towards Ukraine under Tsarist and Soviet rule. As Putin’s (2021) amateur historical essay showed, Russians continue to believe Tsarist and Soviet rule was beneficial to Russians and non-Russians alike.

The Tsarist Russian Empire viewed ‘Little Russians’ as a branch of the pan-Russian nation while the USSR viewed Russians and Ukrainians as close but different peoples. Eastern Ukrainians and particularly Ukraine’s Russian speakers bought into the Soviet myth of close but different peoples. Unlike in Tsarist Russia, where eastern Ukrainian identity was suppressed, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire western Ukrainian identity had flourished and decades of conflict with Poland further cemented it. Western Ukrainians never therefore believed Soviet myths of ‘fraternal Russian brothers.’

The borders of Western Ukraine were fought over by Polish and Ukrainian nationalists and resolved by Stalin’s Soviet Union, and there has been no Polish-Ukrainian territorial conflict since 1947. Ukraine emerged from the disintegration of the USSR in a peaceful manner and its south-eastern borders were only challenged by Russia a quarter of a century later. While

the war with Poland was mainly fought by western Ukrainians it is southeastern Russian-speaking Ukrainians who are on the frontline of the Rus-sian-Ukrainian war. Ukraine's wars with Poland and Russia were both territorial conflicts *and* a struggle with neighbours who were unwilling to recognise a Ukrainian identity and people.

As this book shows, Russia's challenge is far greater to Ukraine than its borders. Chapter 5 analyses how Putin's reintegration of Tsarist and White Russian emigre political and military leaders and writings has returne Russia to pre-Soviet views of Ukraine and Ukrainians. Putin's 'obsession' about Ukraine drives his Russian military aggression out of a false belief that a country's identity was set in stone 1,000 years ago and can never be changed. Russian leaders believe western Ukrainians came to power in an 'illegal putsch' during the Euromaidan Revolution and ever since have been imposing their alien 'fascist, Russophobic' values on 'Russian Ukraine.' The election of the Jewish-Ukrainian Russian-speaking eastern Ukrainian Zelenskyy has not changed this false Russian narrative; in fact, because the Ukrainian President has not followed in the footsteps of Lukashenka he has been added to the long list of 'Ukrainian nationalists.' If Ukrainian leaders do not act like 'Little Russians' (in the manner of 'White Russian' Lukashenka) they are 'nationalists' and lead a Western puppet state.

Russian stereotypes and myths have become so widespread in Russia it is difficult to find think tank experts and academics who actually understand Ukraine. Importantly, Russian leaders, experts and most scholars are unable to comprehend the very concept of Russian-speaking Ukrainian patriots. This author has found far more experts and scholars undertaking interesting and balanced research and writing in Poland, the UK, the USA and Canada but, as the paucity of Russian references and footnotes in this book show, not in Russia.

Russia's weak understanding of Ukrainian reality, as opposed to stereotypes and myths, and the hegemony of 'red-white-brown' nationalism lies behind the failure of the 'New Russia' project. The majority of the inhabitants of Ukraine's south-eastern regions are loyal patriots and they viewed 'New Russia' and the Russian World as artificial and imported constructs. Prior to 2014, separatism had only limited (but never majority) support in

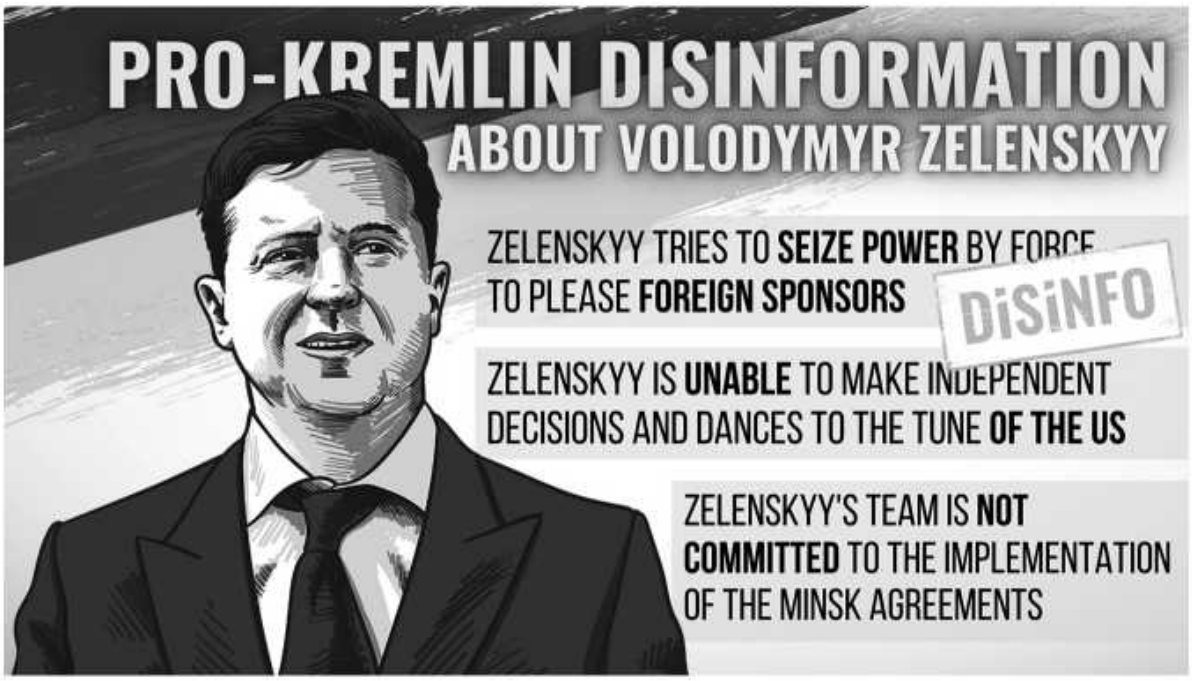
PRO-KREMLIN DISINFORMATION
ABOUT VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY
ZELENSKYY TRIES TO SEIZE POWER BY FORCE
TO PLEASE FOREIGN SPONSORS
DiSiNFO
ZELENSKYY IS UNABLE TO MAKE INDEPENDENT
DECISIONS AND DANCES TO THE TUNE OF THE US
ZELENSKYY'S TEAM IS NOT
COMMITTED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE MINSK AGREEMENTS

Figure 9.1 Russian Information Warfare Targets Ukrainian President Zelenskyy
Source: https://euvsdisinfo.eu/dropping-rumour-bombs-in-ukraine

either Crimea or the Donbas - but nowhere else. In these two regions, support for separatism came from Russian great power nationalist forces who denied the existence of Ukraine and Ukrainians.

The Russian-Ukrainian war will not end any time soon because Putin is in power until 2036, great power nationalism has a hegemonic dominance over Russian political life, a post-imperial Russian identity towards Ukraine has been on life support for nearly three decades, and the majority of Russians cannot entertain a Ukraine outside their 'imagined community.' Russian imperialism is alive and well in the 21st century as reflected in majority support for Crimea's annexation, the detachment of the Donbas from Ukraine, issuing of Russian passports to Ukrainian residents of the DNR and LNR and mercenaries ('volunteers') fighting in defence of compatriots against Ukraine. Only a psychiatrist - but not a political scientist - could attempt to understand how Russians bizarrely believe their support for these four policies will translate into Ukrainians continuing to view them as 'fraternal brothers.'

Ukrainians are more realistic about how the war - like all wars - has forever changed their relations with Russians. Positive Ukrainian attitudes to Russia collapsed by two-thirds from 91 percent under Yushchenko in 2009, the same year Medvedev accused the Ukrainian president of implementing 'Ukrainian nationalist' policies (Kuzio 2015, pp.438-439), to a low of 37 percent at the end of the first year of the war in 2014. As the war grinds on, casualties grow and the number of veterans increase, Ukrainian attitudes towards Russia will continue to deteriorate.

The Russian-Ukrainian war will continue for the foreseeable future because of two factors. The first is that Russian national identity will continue to view its 'imagined community' as greater than that of the Russian Federation. Ukraine for most Russians is part of their 'imagined community.' The second is that other historical conflicts, such as Britain's relationship with Ireland (see Kuzio 2020), point to identities not changing quickly and driving conflict for long periods of time. 82 years separated the 1916 Irish Easter Rising from the 1998 Good Friday Agreement which ended 'The Troubles' (see Kuzio 2020). The Russian-Ukrainian war will continue for the foreseeable future because it is an outcome of Russia's denial of the existence of Ukraine as a country and Ukrainians as a separate people. The war will continue because Russians will continue to view Ukrainians as part of a pan-Russian nation and are unable therefore to accept a Ukraine outside the Russian World and Eurasia.

Note

1 https://novorosinform.org/russkih-derzhat-v-rabstve-donbass-gotov-k-osvobozhde niyu-borodaj-78828.html

2 https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2019/01/25/zhirinovskiy-vsya-ukraina-dolzhna-voy ti-v-sostav-rossii-cherez-referendum.

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